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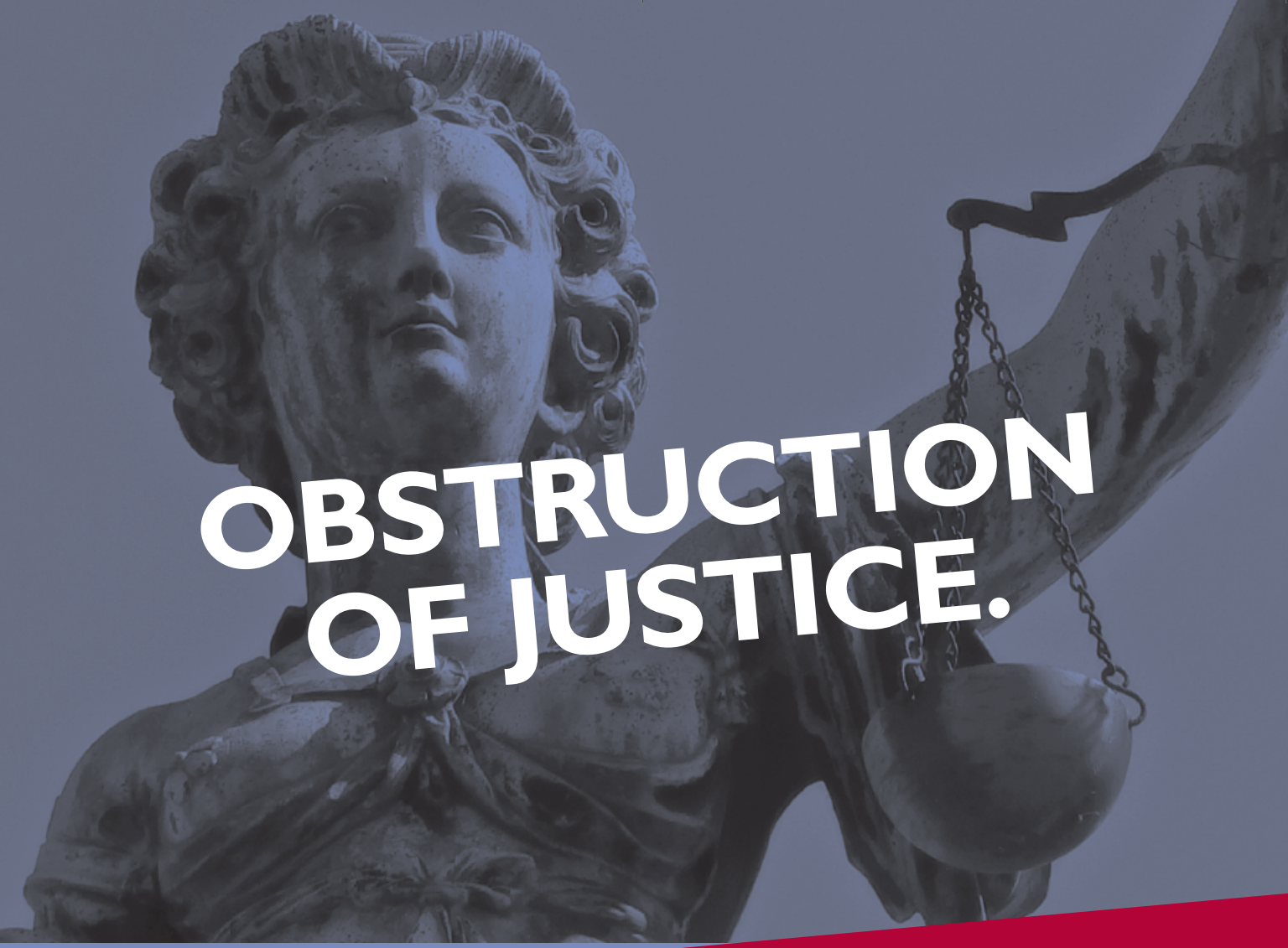

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

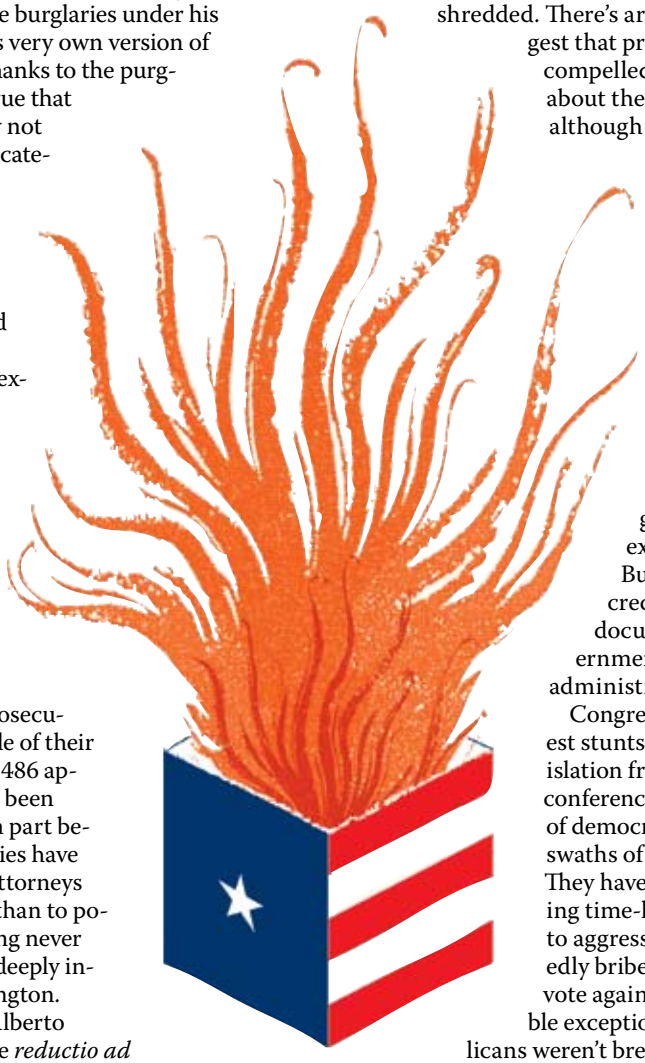
A Journal of Politics and the Arts

VOLUME 236 WASHINGTON, APRIL 2, 2007 NUMBER 4,810

Leaving Normal

In the historical race to the bottom that is Nixon v. Bush, the late trickster would seem to have the edge: He was an unimpeachable lawbreaker—actually, an impeachable one—a claim that doesn't quite stick to Bush. But, in the last month, Bush has been closing fast. While he may not have any second-rate burglaries under his belt, his record now includes his very own version of the Saturday Night Massacre, thanks to the purging of eight U.S. attorneys. It's true that his behavior in this episode may not run up the score in compulsory categories like obstruction of justice or lying under oath. But the fact that he has inflicted massive damage on the American system without apparently breaking many laws should earn Bush major style points.

The Bush administration has exacted such damage because it has poisoned a fragile ecosystem. It turns out that, for generations, presidential power has been checked by an unwritten set of customs and norms as much as by laws and rules. Take the Justice Department. U.S. attorneys serve at the pleasure of the president. But, until now, presidents almost never fired prosecutors they appointed in the middle of their terms—perhaps only two of the 486 appointed in the last 25 years have been canned in this fashion. This is in part because presidents from both parties have implicitly conceded that these attorneys have a higher loyalty to the law than to political patrons—an understanding never enshrined in the U.S. Code but deeply ingrained in the culture of Washington.



Then along came Karl Rove, Alberto Gonzales, Harriet Miers, and the *reductio ad absurdum* of unthinking Bush loyalism, Kyle Sampson. In their memos, they conflate the competence of prosecutors with fealty to the Republican Party. Thus, they judge David Iglesias to be underperforming for his failure to prosecute New Mexico Democrats on tenuous charges on the eve of the 2006 election, and they concoct post-hoc rationales for displeasure with Carol Lam, who indicted the corrupt GOP representative Randy "Duke" Cunningham and began scouring the dealings of his seemingly venal colleagues and their co-conspirators in the Defense Department. And, in a flash, by purging these attorneys, the Bushies have subverted a set of norms that had long ensured federal prosecutors would deploy the law without partisan favor.

It's not the only norm that this administration has shredded. There's arguably nothing in the law to suggest that presidential aides like Rove should be compelled to testify under oath in public about their roles in bureaucratic hijinks—although the Supreme Court could change that. Yet generations of presidents have largely deferred to Congress and subjected their underlings to the humiliating spectacle of raising their hands and then answering (or not) showboating congressmen. Nor is there any specific statute mandating that presidents pay heed to government scientists, intelligence analysts, and other in-house wonks. But, before the Bush administration, presidents generally yielded to disinterested expertise. That's to say nothing of Bush's unprecedented mania for secrecy and rampant classification of documents or his exploitation of government agencies to disseminate pro-administration agitprop.

Congress has been the stage for the brashest stunts. Bush's allies have rewritten legislation from whole cloth in closed-door conference committees, reversing decades of democratic procedure and rendering vast swaths of the legislative process a charade. They have held votes open for hours, bucking time-honored codes of conduct in order to aggressively lobby (or, in one case, allegedly bribe) Republicans who intended to vote against the president. With the notable exception of the alleged bribe, the Republicans weren't breaking any laws. They were simply ignoring a long-standing bipartisan consensus that had developed over time to ensure transparency and fairness.

There are, on the margins, correctives for the Bush-era abuses. Congress could repeal the provisions in the Patriot Act that permit the president to fill vacant U.S. attorney slots without Senate approval. And it could rewrite its

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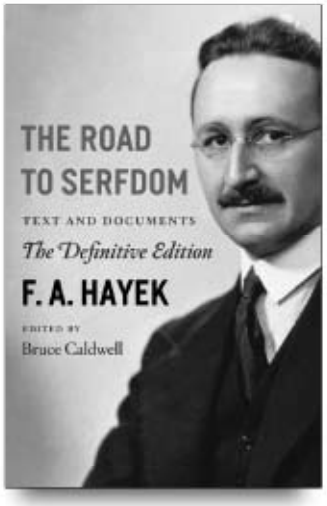
Politics & War
FROM CHICAGO



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own rules to limit the power of conference committees to remake legislation in the middle of the night.

But one can't help feeling a sense of helplessness in the face of this partisan subversion of process. If a president breaks the law, then he stands to incur the retributive justice laid out in the Constitution—Sam Ervin's gavel landing hard. Breaking a norm, on the other hand, isn't a punishable offense—except with shame and name-calling. And denouncing a president as a "norm-breaker" is, let's face it, not the most devastating retort.

Worst of all, once a president destroys an old norm, it isn't very easy to restore it. The next presidents, even high-minded ones, will have difficulty denying themselves the political advantages accrued by Bush. The history of reform, not to mention the annals of cultural anthropology, is filled with cautionary tales about the near-impossibility of restoring old standards. For example. every time a candidate or political party discovers a new loophole in the campaign finance laws—soft money, 527s—every other candidate quickly embraces the very same reform-skirting device.

If they set aside partisan interests, Bush's supporters would understand the toll of his presidency. Conservatives, at least those in the Burkean tradition, have eloquently extolled the wisdom embedded in norms and the futility of restoring them after they fall. Nixon's ghost is surely hearing Bush's footsteps.

A Dictator on the Brink

Robert Mugabe is a monster. The world ought to have realized this back in the 1970s, when he began preaching the wisdom of the Maoist revolution, or at least in the 1980s, after he ascended to Zimbabwe's presidency and slaughtered the minority Ndebele tribe by the thousands. But there can be no doubt, at this late date, that Mugabe has become one of the world's most grotesque dictators.

DESMOND KWANDE/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Yet there is some hope on the horizon. In 27 years of iron-fisted rule, Mugabe has never appeared weaker than over the last two months. His attempt to extend his term by yet another two years was met with discord within his own political party, ZANU-PF. Five weeks ago, a protest threatened to engulf Harare's poor townships. And, on March 11, police stormed a public prayer meeting, arresting and torturing dozens of opposition activists (including the movement's main leader, Morgan Tsvangirai) and murdering one protester.

Statistics tell the rest about Mugabe's perilous state. Inflation is the highest in the world, at nearly 2,000 percent. Life expectancy is one of the world's lowest, in the mid-thirties. Mugabe's violent displacement of hundreds of thousands into the countryside and his politically orchestrated famines make the accusation of genocide hardly a hysterical claim.

While preaching the platitudes of black nationalism, Mugabe's regime resembles apartheid-era South Africa. A tiny clique rules over all. Large-scale demonstrations are banned. His police beat demonstrators with *sjamboks*, the short whips that became an international symbol of oppression during the Sharpeville and Soweto massacres. Mugabe's dreaded Central Intelligence Organization rivals the old South African secret police in its criminal brutality. And, in an incident straight out of the apartheid playbook, Mugabe's thugs reportedly stole the body of the man killed in the March 11 protest to bury him secretly. This preemptive grave-robbing was intended to avoid the complication of a mass political funeral that would draw further international attention.

The West, to its credit, has long supported the political and civic organizations pressing for democratic change in Zimbabwe. But we are not doing nearly enough. Despite its brutality, the regime is hardly isolated, which is why we should be sharply pressuring Mugabe's African allies—South Africa in particular—to renounce him. And U.S. sanctions targeting the dictator's apparatus could be tightened considerably. Mugabe's brutal rule is finally approaching a tipping point. It's now our job to give the hooligan of Harare one last shove. ◆

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Extreme Makeover

How Heather Mac Donald's stolen bicycle led to Guantánamo Bay.

JONATHAN CHAIT

WHAT CAUSES lefties to turn into conservatives? Conservatives are fascinated with this question, repeating, often for years on end, their stories of deliverance from liberal hell to conservative heaven. Several such testimonies can be found in a new volume, *Why I Turned Right: Leading Baby Boom Conservatives Chronicle Their Political Journeys*. Most of the journeys described are short ones—from apolitical child of (generally) conservative parents to conservative young adult. (Rich Lowry's progression from son of Republican parents to avid teenage reader of *National Review* to editor of *National Review* lacks the dramatic tension of, say, Whittaker Chambers's *Witness*.) Of the essays that *do* describe genuine left-to-right conversions, the striking thing about them is that encounters with actual liberalism are virtually absent. Heather Mac Donald details her experiences in academia with literary deconstructionism and critical legal studies. P.J. O'Rourke recalls that he "was a communist, unless I really was an anarchist or an anarcho-syndicalist or a Trotskyite or a Maoist." And Stanley Kurtz describes campus activists cheering when Ronald Reagan was shot and the sight of "severed pig heads impaled on poles carried by antiwar demonstrators in New York's Central Park."

If I have my history correct, however, the Brookings Institution does not take its principal intellectual inspiration from Michel Foucault; Tip O'Neill did not cheer Reagan's shooting; and attendees of the Democratic National Committee never marched in public with impaled pigs' heads. I guess I don't understand how the recoiling from an ugly campus protest leads directly to a desire to privatize Social Security.

The older generation of neoconservatives, such as Irving Kristol and Norman Podhoretz, at least had the decency to defect to the right in the late '60s and early '70s, at a time when the Democratic Party and mainstream liberalism were flirting with radicalism. The new generation of right-wing converts, on the other hand, switched sides after the Democratic Party had already pulled back from the McGovernite brink. (Jimmy Carter and Michael Dukakis were centrist technocrats; Walter Mondale was an heir to Hubert Humphrey, the "Hump" in the New Left slogan "Dump the Hump.") And yet the converts all seem to consider the GOP the only alternative to joining the pigs'-heads marchers.

TRB
From Washington

The conversion stories featured in *Why I Turned Right* are not atypical in this regard. David Horowitz offers the model for this left-right metamorphosis, having changed almost overnight from gun-storing Black Panther wannabe to radical right-wing culture warrior—a story he has recounted in no fewer than four (as we go to press) books.

Christopher Hitchens is a more recent example of the phenomenon. In a 2001 *Atlantic Monthly* essay, Hitchens excoriated figures like Noam Chomsky, bell hooks, and Oliver Stone before concluding with a general denunciation of "America's liberals"—as if his targets were typical liberals, or even liberals at all. One day Hitchens was denouncing liberals as cruel imperialist aggressors (e.g., attacking Bill Clinton's 1998 air strike against Sudan), the next day as cowardly appeasers. Hitchens differs from the typical convert only in that he has managed to retain many of his Trotskyite beliefs even as he's adopted new, neoconservative ones.

Why do these converts register their disgust with the far left by immediately hopping into bed with the right, rather than settling down with some nice neoliberal think tank? The answer is that the content of one's beliefs can change, but one's intellectual style rarely does.

For example, in her chapter in *Why I Turned Right*, Manhattan Institute fellow Mac Donald describes how she "had fallen under the thrall of deconstruction." She aptly skewers her former belief system as a kind of exotic wordplay in which "ethical responsibility is a fiction and good and evil are completely interchangeable." Unfortunately, this description bears more than a passing similarity to Mac Donald's current work explaining away American torture. (In a typical article, she accused torture critics of "succumbing to the utopian illusion that we can prevail while immaculately observing every precept of the Sermon on the Mount.") Conversely, it's not surprising that the one contributor to *Why I Turned Right* who describes himself as at all uncomfortable with the tenets of conservatism, David Brooks, also declares himself to have been a moderate liberal in his prior incarnation.

Stylistically, leftism and conservatism have more in common with each other than either does with liberalism. The ex-radical once believed the free market and the U.S. military were perfectly evil; now he believes the exact opposite. He will never be satisfied with the "well, yes, sort of, but …" explanations. He craves—to use a favorite conservative slogan—moral clarity.

Newly christened conservatives also have the thrill of joining a movement: "I found myself in the same trench as people like Paul Wolfowitz and Jeane Kirkpatrick," as Hitchens put it. Most conservative converts convey a similar sense that they have joined a hardy band of fellow believers who have broken through the tissue of lies fed to them by the academy and media.

Memoirs of conservatives who have moved left are rarer and tend to read like the tales of cult escapees. The emphasis is on what was left behind—Michael Lind's *Up from Conservatism*, David Brock's *Blinded by the Right*—rather than what is joined. Conservative stories, by contrast, follow the arc of religious redemption (or, less charitably, of joining a cult): I was lost until, praised be Reagan, I found the true path.

One of the oddities of conversion literature is how proudly converts trumpet their former stupidity. "When my Holdsworth bicycle was stolen from in front of the Yale law school," recalls Mac Donald, "I felt that redistributionist justice had been done." (Today, no doubt, tax cuts for the rich give her the same feeling.)

Let me just note that, when *my* college bike was stolen, I felt no ideological gratification. Nor did four years in Ann Arbor fighting some truly nutty left-wingers make me one iota more sympathetic to Newt Gingrich. Mac Donald explains her leftist naïveté as an unconscious swallowing of liberal propaganda—she was "a liberal by default, the inevitable condition of those who do not bother to educate themselves about social facts." Default, dear Heather, is not in our stars, but in ourselves. ◆

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CORRESPONDENCE

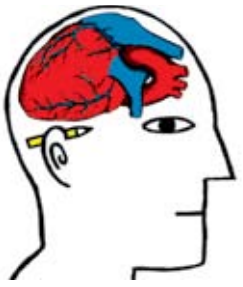
Small Quibbles

Keelin McDonell's piece about Smithsonian Secretary Lawrence Small contained numerous inaccuracies and left readers with a false impression ("Smallville," March 5 & 12). McDonell criticized Secretary Small and his executives, but she failed to include any response from her interview with the Smithsonian's deputy secretary, who answered all her questions. Two specific inaccuracies in the piece relate to Smithsonian business contracts. First, the image-licensing agreement with Corbis is *not* exclusive. People can go directly to the museums for photos, as they always have. Corbis fees vary depending on use, and the museums charge or waive fees—again, depending on use. Also, the Smithsonian currently has image-licensing agreements with several other firms. Second, the Showtime contract does not require filmmakers who want significant amounts of Smithsonian content to be "affiliated" with Showtime. In fact, the filmmakers never talk to anyone at Smithsonian Networks or Showtime; they come directly to the Smithsonian. Finally, McDonell's closing comment regarding Small's private feather collection is wrong—he no longer owns it. The collection was turned over in 2004 to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Linda St. Thomas
Director of Media Relations
Smithsonian Institution

Keelin McDonell responds:

Linda St. Thomas contends that I "left readers with a false impression" of Secretary Small's tenure at the Smithsonian. She may be pleased, then, to hear of some of the "impressions" of Small that have subsequently appeared in *The Washington Post*, including reports on his use of Smithsonian funds for, among other things, the interior decorating of his own home and the possibility that the attorney general may investigate the legality of Small's actions. And what St. Thomas labels "inaccuracies" in my piece are not, in fact, untruths. I never claimed the Corbis deal is exclusive, and the fact that it is nonexclusive does not mean that it is not harmful—scholars still must relinquish control of their images, without foreknowledge of how those images might be used. As for the Showtime deal, the contract clearly states that, unless an independent project of significant length is offered one of six yearly exemptions, it must be produced for the Showtime channel Smithsonian on Demand. And, while Small did turn over about 200 illegal objects, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this only amounts to one-fifth of the 1,000 artifacts he has admitted to having in his collection. Unless he has otherwise disposed of those items, they remain his to admire. Instead of defending Small, in the future St. Thomas may want to take up the cause of the Smithsonian's true stewards—the scholars whose work has been compromised by the secretary's cavalier business practices.



Oversight Out of Mind

While reading a recent edition of your magazine, I was surprised to learn that "[f]or over a decade, GOP oversight committees treated businesses with the lightest of touches" ("Hearing Aid," February 5). That statement is simply wrong. As the House Energy and Commerce Committee's chief oversight and investigations counsel during that time, I had the privilege to serve under committee chairmen Joe Barton, Billy Tauzin, and Tom Bliley. Collectively, they held more than 200 investigative hearings. While I can't speak for all Republicans, I'll stack our record up against that of any committee in any era—Democrat or Republican—in terms of scope, depth, and quality. Our investigations of Enron/Arthur Andersen, WorldCom, Global Crossing, and Qwest brought corporate ethics to center stage and directly resulted in passage of the landmark Sarbanes-Oxley legislation. Our Ford/Firestone investigation produced the Tread Act, the most significant upgrade of auto-safety rules in more than a decade, and our work on hospital billing practices forced some of the country's largest hospitals to adopt changes that are now benefiting some of society's most vulnerable citizens. As for the pharmaceutical industry, our investigation into prescription-drug reimbursement under Medicare and Medicaid resulted in changes to the law that will save taxpayers an estimated $25 billion over the next ten years. Recently, we held BP accountable for oil spills on Alaska's North Slope, much to the chagrin of critics who claimed that a Republican Congress would never challenge Big Oil. In addition, by shining the national spotlight on Hewlett-Packard's corporate spying scandal, the committee made more Americans aware of the limits to our privacy, prompting Congress to enact the first federal ban on the insidious practice of "pretexting." In virtually every investigation, we made public thousands of key internal corporate and government documents so that the American people could judge matters for themselves. So much for light touches! During my tenure, everyone associated with the Energy and Commerce Committee—on both sides of the aisle—considered oversight and investigations not only a constitutional obligation, but a moral imperative. I am extremely proud of the work that we did, the tremendous staff that I worked with, and the representatives that I served. Chairman John Dingell is well-known for his tenacious oversight, and that will likely continue. But there can be little doubt that our record of vigorous, meaningful investigations has bolstered the distinguished legacy of this committee.

Mark Paoletta
Chief counsel for oversight & investigations at the House Energy and Commerce Committee 1997–2007

Bradford Plumer responds:

Republicans on the House Energy and Commerce Committee did conduct a few investigations—many of them quite valuable. But consider some numbers. In 1993–94, under Dingell's chairmanship, the committee's oversight efforts culminated in a 117-page report tallying its activities. A decade later, under Republican Joe Barton, its work could be summarized in a mere 24 pages. Or, as Barton himself told *The Boston Globe* in 2005, "Republicans in general have not emphasized oversight in the way that Mr. Dingell did." In any case, I'm amused by the notion that Republicans were the scourge of Big Oil because they held hearings on a broken pipeline. If only they had applied similar scrutiny to the millions in subsidies they handed out to oil companies over the years.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS: Due to an editing mistake, "This American Lie" (March 19) described "This American Life" as an NPR program. In fact, it is distributed by Public Radio International. We regret the error. ◆

TOMASZ WALENTA

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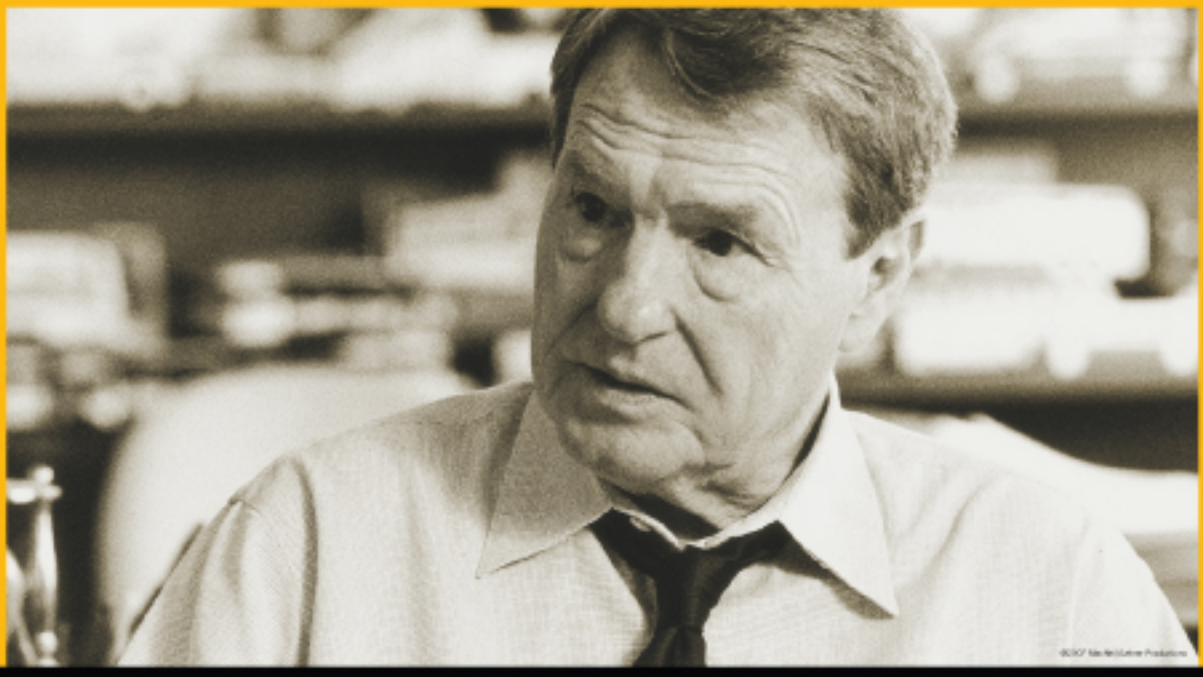

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A River in Egypt

Global-warming denialists in denial.

Fred Smith isn't exactly known for his timidity on the subject of climate change. The president of the Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI), a free-market think tank based in Washington, D.C., he has derided concern over global warming and has gone on television to rail against Al Gore's "evil consumptive ways." But, in February, when Smith was called to testify before the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, he sounded like a cornered man.

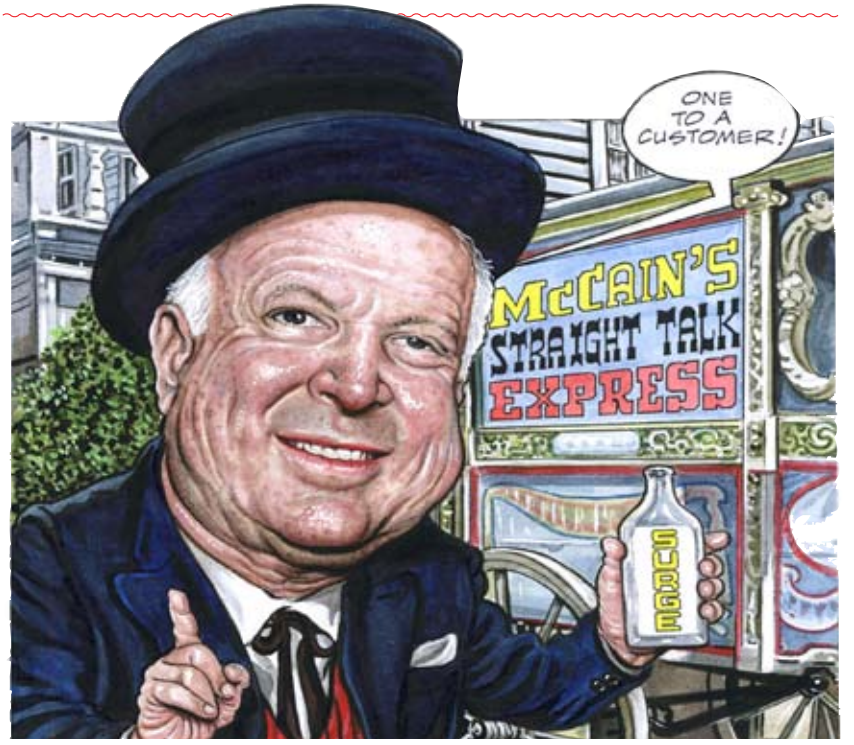
"I am aware," he began somewhat cautiously, "that CEI is regarded as a contrarian voice on the science of climate change." Senate Republicans had invited him to comment on an emissions-reduction plan put forward by a group of green-minded companies, including General Electric and Duke Energy. But, with Barbara Boxer wielding the gavel, Smith couldn't simply launch into his usual tirade against global warming. Instead, like a boy forced to apologize for pulling his sister's hair, he ceded grudgingly, "I am happy for the purposes of this discussion to accept all the scientific arguments behind their proposals." Hence, he sniffed, "attempts to allege 'climate denialism' in response to my points are ad hominem attacks not worthy of consideration."

It's getting hard out here for a global-warming skeptic. Al Gore has an Oscar. The latest assessment from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has declared with 90 percent certainty that greenhouse gases are largely responsible for heating the planet, a conclusion even the White House now accepts. Capitol Hill—where groups like CEI could once count on a friendly hearing from congressional Republicans, 84 percent of whom are *still* unconvinced that climate change is caused by humans—is now controlled by Democrats. Meanwhile, ExxonMobil, which had donated more than $2 million to CEI since 1998, recently announced that it would no longer fund the organization. Mocked by longtime enemies, abandoned by erstwhile friends, what's a global-warming skeptic to do?

It wasn't long ago that CEI was reveling in its role as the country's most notorious skeptic group. In 1997, the organization helped form the Cooler Heads Coalition to "dispel the myths of global warming" by, among other things, sending pseudo-experts to testify before Congress and appear on television. The group's director of energy and global warming policy, Myron Ebell, played an instrumental role in convincing President Bush to reverse his campaign pledge to regulate carbon-dioxide emissions from the utility industry. (The Clean Air Trust named Ebell its "clean air villain of the month" in March 2001 for his "ferocious lobbying charge.") Last year, to preempt the release of Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*, the institute aired two schmaltzy 60-second spots in 14 cities singing the praises of carbon dioxide. Both ended with the tagline: "They call it pollution … we call it life."

That sort of misinformation has long been the group's métier. CEI was following a strategy like the one outlined in a memo from the American Petroleum Institute, which *The New York Times* obtained in 1998: "Victory will be achieved when … recognition of uncertainty becomes part of the 'conventional wisdom.'" So long as people were forced

WHITE HOUSE WATCH *With* **DREW FRIEDMAN**



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to spend their waking hours debating whether climate change was really happening, they wouldn't have time to discuss what to do about it.

Unfortunately for CEI, that debate is over, and climate-change skeptics are on the losing end. Now, the group finds itself beleaguered in Washington—not to mention vilified in the national press. Ellen Goodman of *The Boston Globe* recently wrote that climate-change doubters are "on a par with Holocaust deniers" in a column that skeptics love to cite as evidence that they're being persecuted. At the end of an interview, CEI's in-house lawyer, Chris Horner, told me with a resigned sigh, "Look, don't write the standard story here, making us out to be the bad guys."

So, with their careers in peril, CEI types are adapting to the new climate. Although there are still plenty of unabashed global-warming deniers out there—especially on college campuses, where budding conservatives who don't seem to have gotten the memo yet are churning out op-eds—many skeptics are now coalescing around a more moderate-sounding approach. Ebell insists that neither he nor his colleagues dispute the fact of global warming as they once did. "We try to react to the scientific research that comes out—and we've adjusted our political rhetoric as well," he says. And adjust they have, developing a new line that goes something like this: Sure, we'll accept that global warming is occurring and humans bear some responsibility. But it's hard to predict exactly *how bad* a warmer world will be. And the proposals for reducing emissions in the United States are all costly and rife with problems. And, even if they *could* work, we can't stop climate change because it's impossible to convince India and China to curb their rapidly growing emissions. And so on.

One tactic that lately seems to give deniers special pleasure is mounting their case against the global-warming consensus from the left. So you get the odd spectacle of Smith going before the Senate to denounce cap-and-trade—the widely endorsed idea that the government should set a national ceiling on carbon emissions and then allow companies to buy and sell pollution credits—on populist grounds. "The corporations we see baying for a cap-and-trade program are out to enrich themselves without thought for the poor," he told Congress. (He even pointed out that—horror—Enron had once supported the idea.) Or you get conservative Senator James Inhofe referring to companies that would benefit from a cap-and-trade regime as "climate profiteers." Or Paul Driessen—the author of *Eco-Imperialism: Green Power, Black Death*—saying things like, "It's incredibly patronizing and colonialistic to tell Africa you can't develop because we're concerned about global warming," while arguing that funding the fight against global warming "takes money away from spending on malaria."

Even as they claim to be on board with the latest science, some deniers have continued peddling half-truths. This became clear during my conversation with Ebell. "We've had a flat global mean temperature since 1998," he notes. "So what are we worried about?" (Ebell is cherry-picking here—1998 was an exceptionally hot year, thanks to El Niño, but global average temperatures have risen steadily since 1900.) He also notes, as did many other "reformed" skeptics I talked to, that the latest IPCC assessment actually lowered previous estimates of the magnitude of the human contribution to warming. (This is misleading; the IPCC mainly just increased its estimate of the cooling effect of aerosols. Those particles will eventually get cleaned up due to clean-air laws, and the result will be more warming, not less.)

Meanwhile, many global-warming skeptics are suffering the indignity of having to deny that they were ever deniers in the first place. Take Kenneth Green of the American Enterprise Institute. Green has previously praised Michael Crichton's *State of Fear*, a novel thick with disinformation about global warming, for having "educated millions of readers about climate science." And, in 2004, he wrote a paper with notorious climate-change denier Timothy Ball called *The Science Isn't Settled*. The paper argued that the scientific models used to predict global warming were "of dubious merit." Now he insists that he accepts the IPCC's baseline conclusions about climate change and says of his relationship with Ball, "We don't agree. The fact that we haven't worked together since then suggests we don't agree." Sounds like the heat is getting to him.

Bradford Plumer

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'A little too smooth,' one presidential aspirant told me. And that's what they will all say … [T]argeting Romney's 'perfect package' will be something of a subcategory of election 2008."

—from A Mormon in the White House: 10 Things Every American Should Know About Mitt Romney, by Hugh Hewitt

Edel Rodriguez

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Not Being There

The twilight of Ned Lamont.

Cambridge, Massachusetts

THE FUSSY RESTAURANT in Harvard Square—with its raspberry walls and sculptural silverware—seemed an unlikely place for a serious political discussion, but Ned Lamont had chosen it nonetheless. Sitting at a table for two on a recent afternoon, he ordered an iced tea and a steak salad, medium rare; then, the man who became a hero to anti-war liberals everywhere by challenging Joe Lieberman in last year's Connecticut Senate race revealed the candidate he was backing in next year's presidential election: Chris Dodd. "I think he's a good man—a man of integrity—and he's well-regarded in Washington on both sides of the aisle," Lamont elaborated in the sort of practiced, formal terms endemic to political endorsements. "So I'm happy to support him."

Actually, this wasn't the first time Lamont had declared his support for Dodd. A few weeks earlier, he had made a similar announcement. But, other than a brief mention on *The Nation*'s blog, no one seemed to notice; even the Dodd campaign—which could use all the help it can get—failed to tout Lamont's endorsement in a press release or on its website. So, while he waited for his meal, Lamont patiently tried out the endorsement yet again, hoping, no doubt, for a more dramatic effect.

It has been quite a comedown for Lamont. Last August, after he scored an upset victory over Lieberman in the Democratic primary, presidential wannabes (including not just Dodd but first-tier candidates like Hillary Clinton, John Edwards, and Barack Obama) were doing everything they could to identify themselves with Lamont—campaigning for him, giving him money, loaning him staff. Now, seven months later, after losing to Lieberman in the general election and then dropping off the political radar as suddenly as he had first appeared on it, Lamont is the one trying—and not necessarily succeeding—to identify himself with one of the presidential candidates, and a second-tier one at that.

Lamont is currently biding his time as a fellow at the Institute of Politics at Harvard's Kennedy School, which functions as a sort of halfway house for recently defeated politicians trying to reenter decent society. Lamont, who made a fortune installing telecom systems on college campuses and was a political novice before challenging Lieberman, theoretically isn't in as dire need of rehab as some of his fellow fellows—such as Nancy Johnson, who spent 24 years as a Connecticut representative before being swept out of office last November. "A lot of these politicians have done it their whole life,

so the thought of losing—there's nothing left; it's the abyss," Lamont said in between bites of his salad. "And, for me, this whole campaign was a little bit of an out-of-body experience." Indeed, the day after losing to Lieberman, Lamont returned to his company's office. But he soon realized that something was missing. "After spending a year trying to end the war," he conceded, "it's a little tough to go back to trying to sell telecommunications to Haverford."

And so Lamont has tried to keep a hand in the political game. He has written an op-ed piece on Iraq for the *Hartford Courant* and an open letter to Lieberman for *The Huffington Post*. He's in talks with a university in Connecticut about setting up a policy institute and may join a think tank in Washington. He has made a few speeches to liberal groups around the country. "I'm doing anything anybody asks me to do," Lamont said. But the requests aren't exactly pouring in. His political schedule, he said, is "light."

Most of Lamont's time these days is spent on the class he teaches once a week at the Institute of Politics. Called "Crashing the Gate," it's an in-depth study of the 2006 Connecticut Senate campaign. Which means that, once a week, Lamont basically relives his unsuccessful effort to unseat Lieberman—discussing the ins and outs of the race and hosting guest lectures by the campaign's major players, including some of the people who helped Lieberman beat him. (A particularly interesting class should be the mid-April session when Lieberman apparatchik Dan Gerstein—who branded Lamont "Negative Ned"—pays a visit.) Lamont professes himself comfortable with the way things turned out last year and is reluctant to engage in much second-guessing. "The race was the race; now, you move forward," he said. But, sometimes, it's hard—especially when your academic specialty is that very election. Lamont said he couldn't help but notice, for instance, the recent pictures of Al Sharpton "hand-in-hand with Bill Clinton down there in Selma"—and think about the grief he took for having Sharpton appear onstage with him the night of his Democratic primary victory.

He also remains puzzled by the fact that, even though he is a Greenwich millionaire and the sort of guy who considers his meeting with Larry Summers one of the highlights of his Harvard sojourn ("Some people around here felt insulted when he challenged them. I loved it!"), he failed to appeal to moderate voters in the general election. "I was looking forward to going to the Chamber of Commerce, because I thought I'd do pretty well in that group," he recalled. "And I tried to go talk to them, and they wouldn't see me. … Within two weeks of winning the primary, I was Trotsky's great-nephew."

And he hasn't forgotten about how so many of the prominent Democrats who pledged their support after he won the primary started slinking away from him as it became increasingly clear he was going to lose the general election. He ruefully recalled going to a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee event in New York: "All the other Democratic candidates stood up and spoke, and then

TOMASZ WALENTA

David Cowles

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they shared the take from the fund-raiser. I was invited to wave from the audience." Indeed, Lamont's decision to endorse Dodd seems motivated in large part by the fact that the Connecticut senator was one of the few prominent Democrats who stuck by him. "I just like guys who are up-front with me," he said.

After lunch, Lamont went back to his office at the Kennedy School—his home while he is at Harvard is a dorm at the Business School—to prepare for his class. That week's session would be devoted to Iraq and featured guest lectures by an Iraq war vet who campaigned on behalf of Lamont and Connecticut Republican Representative Chris Shays, whose narrow win last November was, in part, attributable to his close relationship with Lieberman. For an hour and a half, Lamont led a group of about three dozen students—mostly undergrads, plus a few graduate students and local residents—through a discussion of Iraq policy and how the war might affect a Senate campaign. When it was over, a smattering of students huddled around their teacher and made small talk. But Lamont didn't have much time to linger. Looking at his watch, he started edging toward the door. In a little less than a half-hour, he had a pressing engagement. The Harvard Entrepreneurs Club had invited him to give a speech at its meeting.

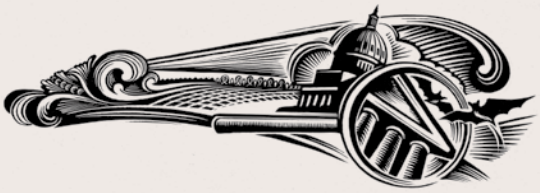
Jason Zengerle

Stage Fright

The B-list goes to war.

These days, as politicians tend to furiously distance themselves from the Iraq war, it's hard to remember back to 2003, when everyone wanted a piece of it. Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz weren't the only ones, after all, itching to give Iraq an ideological makeover. Some celebs seemed disappointed they had missed the chance to lead the invasion themselves, and, after Saddam Hussein's statue fell, more than 50 of them poured over the border with the USO. Arnold Schwarzenegger pumped the troops' adrenaline with a screening of *Terminator 3*. Conan O'Brien staged a push-up competition with a Marine in Kuwait. Toby Keith captured the mood of the nation with his country anthem "Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue": *You'll be sorry that you messed with the U S of A / 'Cause we'll put a boot in your ass / It's the American way*. And then there was Bruce Willis, who swung by to offer a $1 million prize to the lucky kid who caught the deposed dictator. In exchange,

JOHN A. WOODEN: WHITEHOUSE.ORG



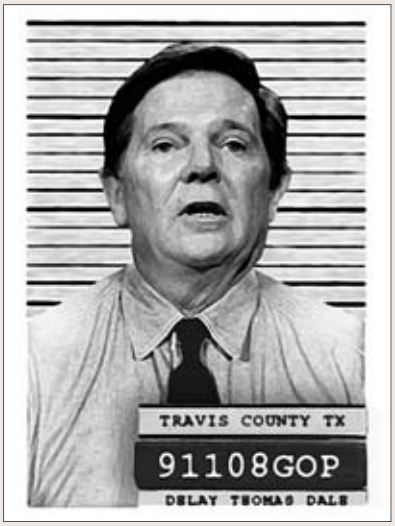
On the Hill

DELAYED GRATIFICATION

The Hammer looks for a new nail.

"I could go on all day about what I'm proud of," Tom DeLay exults into his microphone at a recent Oxonian Society–sponsored luncheon in New York to hawk his new memoir, *No Retreat, No Surrender*. A year after his downfall, DeLay's leathery skin and the loose, papery bags under his eyes make him look old. But the message he delivers to the crowd is energetic and unrepentant: "I'm … proud of the K Street Strategy. I was proud of the Terri Schiavo incident," he says. And, without irony: "We changed the culture of Washington."

Strangely, the 50 or so sweater-vest-and-pearls types in the room just smile tentatively and push their food around their plates with their forks. I was urged to RSVP for the lunch "very early," since it was sure to be a hot and provocative



event. But half the fancy frisée salads in the banquet room have nobody to eat them, and the emcee has to urge the audience to ask questions.

Their indifference reflects DeLay's current position in the world: once larger than life, now a minor curiosity. His era over, the Republican majority he worked so hard to preserve washed away, he has been banished to tussle over his indictment with a mean little Texas judge. But DeLay doesn't see it that way. A clue to his state of mind lies in the original title he wanted for his memoir: "*The American Passion of Tom DeLay* was *my* title," he says at the luncheon, even as a blown-up book cover with the other title sits propped beside him. The title may sound grand. But, like Napoleon at Elba, DeLay has a plan to ensure that his era of greatest influence is yet to come.

As soon as he was ushered out of the Capitol last June, DeLay signed up with a Christian motivational speakers' bureau (sample talent: Michael Franzese, who "quit the mob to follow Jesus"), prognosticated on Fox, and even blasted out a mass e-mail to rally support for Sara Evans, a country singer and Republican contestant on "Dancing With the Stars." But, after ten years as House majority whip and leader, he longed to do something more influential. Come fall, he was ringing up old friends, such as K Street Project co-conspirator Grover Norquist and spiritual adviser Reverend Rick Scarborough, to inform them that something very major was about to be unveiled. DeLay now hopes, friends report, nothing less than to rule the conservative grassroots as magisterially as he ruled the House. "He wants to run the outside," says conservative leader Paul Weyrich.

In December, DeLay launched TomDeLay.com, his new conservative blog. DeLay didn't instantly master the pithy form (on Reagan's birthday, he posted an entire 4,000-word Gipper speech) or attract loving fans (he started censoring messages after he received over 100 "mean, nasty, … vulgar" posts during the blog's first hour). But, before long, he was sounding off on 2008 like a pro in a grainy YouTube video produced by a blog called MuscleHead Revolution and "asking

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a lot of bloggers, right-of-center, to guest-post at TomDeLay.com," says RedState.com CEO Erick Erickson.

But DeLay doesn't just want to become the conservative Kos. He's arranging to become the conservative MoveOn, too. Along with the blog, DeLay inaugurated his new "Grassroots Action/Information Network," whose members are promised, for $52 per year, a place in the ranks of an immense holy militia designed to battle "radical leftist agendas wherever they may be found in the United States" via weekly e-mails, letter-writing drives, and petitions. Even this is not quite enough. A few weeks ago, he announced the addition of a second grassroots organization: the Coalition for a Conservative Majority (CCM), which touts itself as the "first such conservative organization worthy of its name." CCM will be a network of intensely involved activists with chapters in all 50 states—and DeLay is its Howard Dean.

If the proliferation of projects sounds slightly manic, it's all in a day's work for the People's Hammer. In the House, DeLay was known for his talent as a marshal, whipping moderates like Chris Shays and extremists like Helen Chenoweth into lockstep. He sees a need for such harsh discipline in the grassroots, whose groups are too disorganized and dispersed. "He wants to do something that will work on *all* the issues," says Norquist.

But DeLay's mission to save the conservative grassroots isn't driven only by an ideological calling, the fulfillment of the American Passion's prophecy. There's also revenge. The activist troops he's now so eager to captain are the very ones that failed to come to his aid enthusiastically enough when he was under siege a year ago. "He was extremely frustrated at the end" of his time in Congress, notes Weyrich, because he "thought that he did not get the kind of support from the outside that he felt he was entitled to." Now DeLay has the chance to take over the grassroots and mold them into an obedient force. Says Weyrich, "He's thinking to himself, 'If *I* construct an organization. . . .' "

The grassroots will be tougher to whip than Republican lawmakers. Several conservative activists told me they find the idea that they need DeLay's training distasteful, as if he were on a mission to civilize savages. "I don't think it'll work, because conservatives are very individualistic, and they don't take well to people dictating to them what they need to do," says one. Even if he does gain a foothold, DeLay isn't the only dethroned Republican lawmaker trying to do so. This week, as DeLay flogs his memoir, Dick Armey—an old Hill nemesis whom DeLay describes as a liar "drunk with ambition"—is holding a rally on Capitol Hill for FreedomWorks, his own grassroots movement.

These days, for the Hammer, there's a big gulf between dreams and results. In a crowded elevator on the way down from the lunch talk, DeLay gabs about the liberal get-out-the-vote 527 America Coming Together, its thousands of employees in chapters all across the country, and how his CCM will be just like it. Has he started setting up the chapters? I ask, as we troop into the lobby. "I've hired these guys," he replies, gesturing to two harried-looking aides trailing behind him.

Eve Fairbanks

Heirs to Bob Hope: The WWE divas cheer the troops in Iraq.

Willis requested only a quick Hollywood-style face-to-face. "If you catch him, just give me four seconds with Saddam Hussein," Willis explained.

Four years later, Willis has still not doled out his reward (his rep clarified to *People* that it had been intended for a person "outside the realm of the Armed Forces"), and no one in Hollywood wants to take a meeting in Baghdad. When I checked with the USO in February, the list of entertainers who had gone to Iraq since the New Year contained only a single name: David Alan Grier. Grier is most famously an alum of the early '90s sketch comedy show "In Living Color," though he has also appeared in several movies, including *Jumanji* and *Baad-asssss!* His is a more muted kind of patriotism. "At the end of the day, I feel sorry for all these soldiers," he tells me over the phone after returning from the three-day trip. "But you can't tell them Bush is wrong, this war is wrong, because they're being shot at."

There are many ways to gauge the failure of the U.S. experiment in Iraq. But one way is through the shrinking roster of the USO tours. In 2004, as the battle for Falluja heated up, about 30 celebs, including James Gandolfini from "The Sopranos" and the rapper 50 Cent, made the trip—a bit less wattage than Bob Hope and John Wayne brought to Vietnam in their day, but still pretty A-list. In 2005, as sectarian violence intensified, the number of visiting stars dropped to 20. (And, although Willis offered another reward that year—this time for Osama bin Laden—he did so from the safety of Los Angeles.) By 2006, it was clear that America's entertainers had decided this wasn't such a kick-ass war after all: About 15 celebs showed up—none of them the type who would be permitted to cross the rope line of the *Vanity Fair* Oscar party. Our men and women in uniform were left to make do with the likes of action hero Chuck Norris and his "Walker, Texas Ranger" co-star Marshall Teague.

But, just as the troops soldiered on with subpar body armor, so, too, have they soldiered on with subpar entertainment. Patrick Campbell, who served near Baghdad's airport in 2005, remembers his excitement over hearing that a USO tour including Dean Cain, the actor who played Superman in the mid-'90s series

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"Lois & Clark," was coming by his base. But, thanks to communication snafus, Campbell was forced to chase Cain and the rest of the C-list talent through the desert. "They told us he was at this camp, so we walked over there, and then they said he's at another camp," Campbell recalls. "So we walked over there, and they say, 'No, no, he's back where you were.' All in all, we walked about five miles, and they never showed up. I got stood up by Dean Cain."

The USO blames transportation difficulties for the declining number of tours. Henry Rollins, the former lead singer of the '80s punk band Black Flag, who visited Iraq on a 2004 USO tour, can testify to the logistical difficulties. "To basically go across the street in the Green Zone, we get the multi-Humvee caravan," he explains. "It took like a half an hour to get it going for a seven-minute ride."

According to Donna St. John, vice president of communications for the USO, sometimes the military even tells the organization that it won't accept tours. Iraq has undoubtedly become more dangerous: Newly declared Senate candidate and comedian Al Franken, who has been on four USO tours to Iraq, says on his most recent visits he noticed a depressing increase in fortified outhouses. But, even if A-listers are now more likely to survive a trip to the john, they may still not want to visit such an unpredictable war zone. Stevie Benton played for the troops with his band, Drowning Pool, on the fifth anniversary of September 11. "We were visiting troops in the hospital," he recalls, "and all of a sudden alarms start going off. Somebody was firing mortars. We ended up signing names inside a bomb shelter."

There are other, less expected, dangers for performers, too. The World Wrestling Entertainment women are part of a small but stalwart bunch of red-state talent—including Keith, professional sexy person Leeann Tweeden, and the Dallas Cowboys cheerleaders—who have continued to visit since the initial invasion, both through the USO and its sometimes-partner Armed Forces Entertainment. But, on their last tour, Torrie Wilson—a wrestler who performs moves like the "swinging neckbreaker" in bra-and-panties matches—nearly lost her most valuable assets after taking target practice with the troops. "I'm forgetting the name of the [gun], but you know the ones that just shoot like crazy?" she tells me. "I shot one of those, and you know, the bullets kept flying up, and I had a low cut shirt on, and they were going down in my shirt and burning my chest."

Singed bosoms aside, things could be looking up for the USO. Although they may not score 50 entertainers in six months, like they did in 2003, they have upped the number of celebrity acts to three. When I checked back in March, they had added the Jamie Kennedy hip-hop comedy tour and some football players to David Alan Grier on their list. But Bruce Willis may be less willing to make the sacrifice, especially since Saddam is no longer taking meetings.

Elspeth Reeve

WHO'S CASHING IN THIS WEEK?

MARK MAINZ/GETTY IMAGES

Dick Gephardt

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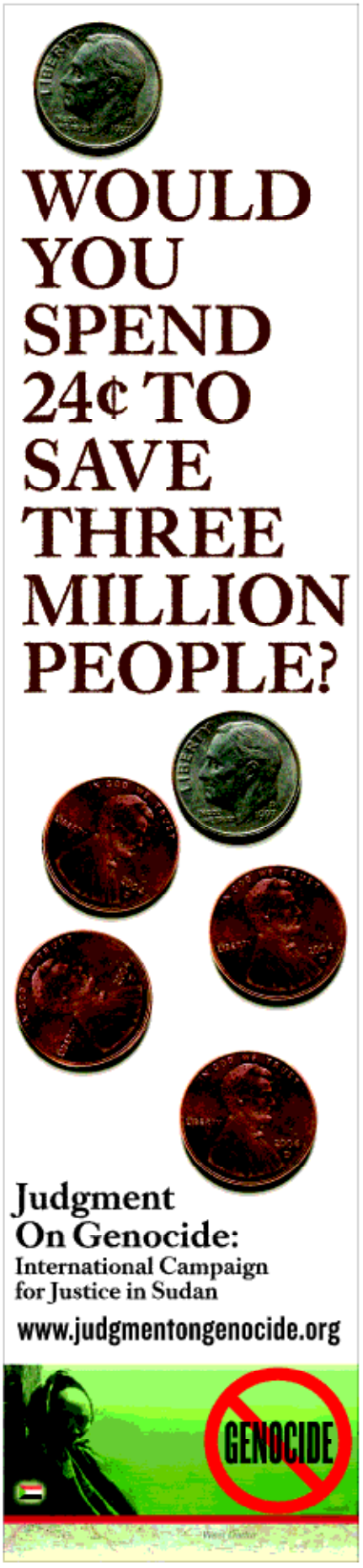
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Second Thoughts

Do the gun nuts have a point?

Two weeks ago, an appeals court panel struck down portions of Washington's ultra-strict gun-control law, which prohibited almost all D.C. residents from owning guns. The decision, penned by famously conservative Judge Laurence Silberman, met with ire from predictable quarters. *The New York Times* accused the panel of storming "blithely past a longstanding Supreme Court precedent, the language of the Constitution and the pressing needs of public safety." Meanwhile, my former colleagues at *The Washington Post*—where I used to write editorials—predicted that "this radical ruling will inevitably mean more people killed and wounded as keeping guns out of the city becomes harder."

It's not difficult to see why gun-control advocates are angry. Silberman's reading of the Second Amendment—he argues that it recognizes the right of *individuals* to possess guns, not just the right of state militias—gives them plenty of reason to be nervous. Consider the following: "[T]he amendment achieves its central purpose by assuring that the federal government may not disarm individual citizens without some unusually strong justification." Or this: "[From the Civil War on,] gun-toting was individualistic, accentuating not group rights of the citizenry but self-regarding 'privileges' of discrete 'citizens' to individual self-protection." Or this: "For too long, most members of the legal academy have treated the Second Amendment as the equivalent of an embarrassing relative, whose mention brings a quick change of subject to other, more respectable, family members. That will no longer do."

The catch? None of these quotes were from Silberman's decision. In fact, all were written by liberal law professors. The first is from Laurence Tribe's famed treatise on the Constitution, the latest version of which Tribe altered in recognition of the growing power of the individual-rights view of the Second Amendment—a view he had long rejected. The second quote is from Akhil Reed Amar's ambitious history, *The Bill of Rights*. And the third is from a law review article by Sanford Levinson.

One can still muster strong arguments in favor of a collective-rights conception of the amendment—that is, a reading which protects the ability of states to have armed militias without extending gun rights to individuals. But the simple truth is that the individual-rights reading is currently ascendant, and not just among gun-loving nuts. If Silberman is a radical with blithe disregard for public safety, he is in exceptionally good company. And so, perhaps it's time for gun-control supporters to come to grips with the fact that the Second Amendment actually means something in contemporary society. For which reason, I hereby advance a modest proposal: Let's repeal the damn thing.

This seems to me the right response to the amendment no matter which broad historical interpretation is correct. If, as gun-control supporters have long argued, the amendment embodies only a collective right and the right to keep guns is indelibly linked to membership in Revolution-era militias—institutions that no longer exist—then the provision is already a dead letter, and repealing it would therefore be a simple matter of constitutional hygiene.

If, on the other hand, the amendment really does—as Silberman, Tribe, Amar, and Levinson claim—confer on individuals the right to bear arms, then it embodies values against which we should be prepared to fight. I grew up obsessively shooting .22-caliber target rifles at summer camp in the Adirondacks. I like guns well enough in rural areas. I don't like them in cities. I don't believe that the Constitution ought to prevent my hometown of Washington—which has a serious problem with gun violence—from making a profoundly different judgment about how available handguns should be than the New York legislature would make for the hamlet near my old camp. Guns, in other words, present a policy question on which different jurisdictions should take very different approaches—including, in some areas, outright bans.

There are lots of good reasons why our values today might not coincide with those of the Founders on the question of guns. The weapons available now, for one thing, are a far cry from muskets, which could never have yielded the kind of street violence contemporary America sees routinely. Plus, the amendment's protection for militias reflected the importance the Founders attached to an armed citizenry as a check against tyrannical government. That is made sense at the time. The Founders had a lot of experience with oppressive rulers and little idea whether the constitutional order they were setting up would remain free; maybe the people would need to overthrow it at some point. After more than two centuries of constitutional government, however, it's safe to assume that an armed citizenry is not "necessary to the security of a free State." The opposite seems closer to the truth; just ask the Bosnians or the Iraqis. And elections, it turns out, do the job pretty well. To put the matter simply, the Founders were

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wrong about the importance of guns to a free society.

But, critically, judges shouldn't be in charge of stripping obsolete rights from the Constitution. If the courts can simply make gun rights disappear, what happens when the First Amendment becomes embarrassing or inconvenient? It corrodes the very idea of a written Constitution when the document means, in practice, the opposite of what its text says. The great beauty of the Constitution is that, unlike, say, the treaties that form the European Union, you can actually read it. You can see how its language embodies principles that still animate the day-to-day operation of American political life. When that is no longer the case, American democracy suffers; it gets unmoored from its source of legitimacy.

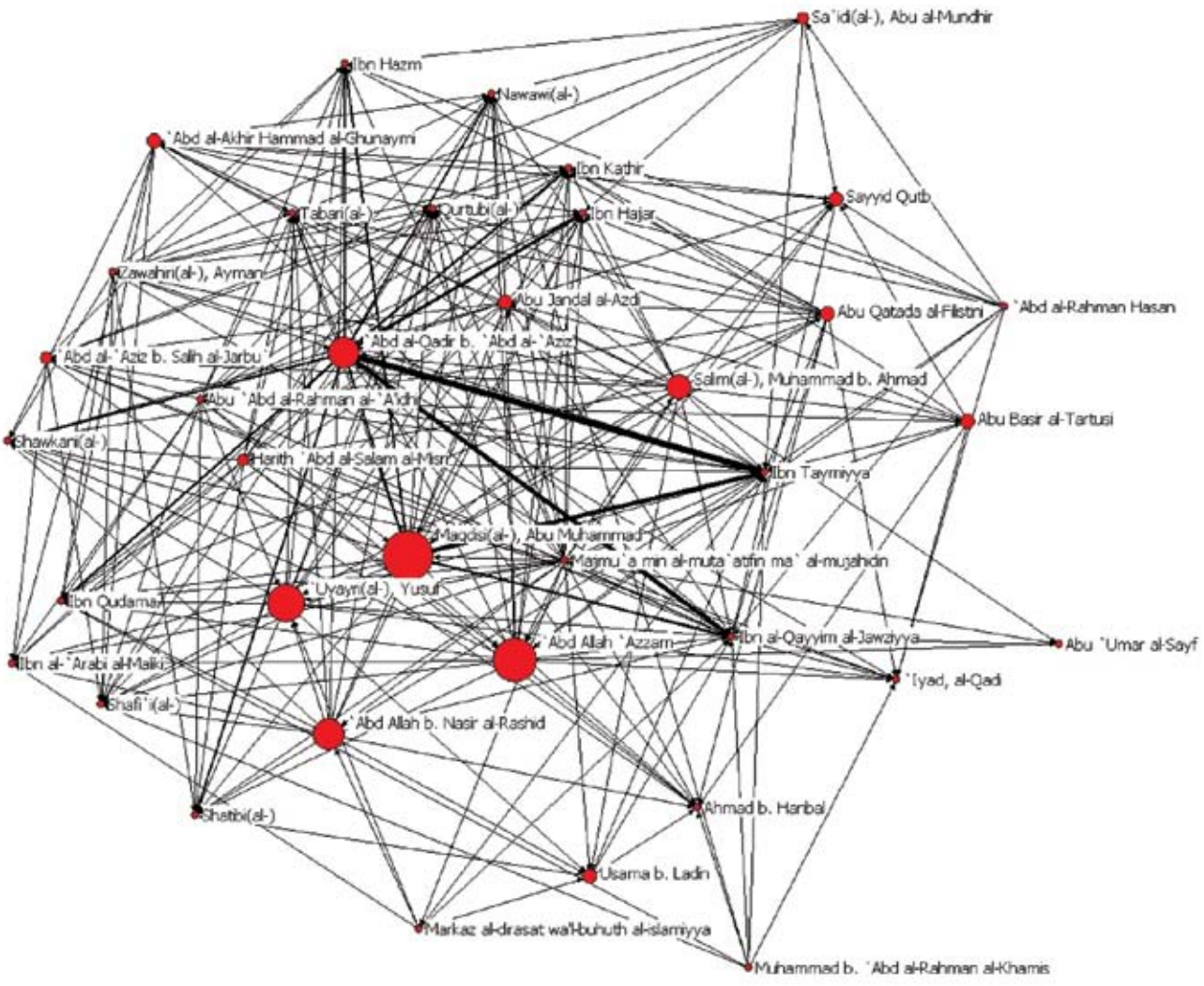
So, if we disagree with the Founders, we should say so—and invoke that provision of the Constitution they specifically designed to let us give voice to our disagreements with them. The Bill of Rights is sacred, but it is not so sacred that we should prefer lying to ourselves about what it actually says, rather than changing it as our needs shift.

It's true that repealing the Second Amendment is politically impossible right now; that doesn't bother me. It *should* be hard to take away a constitutional right. And it is certainly easier to pretend that's not what we're proposing—that the Founders never created the right and that our values and theirs (except, of course, concerning slavery, women, Native Americans, and a few other odds and ends) are more or less congruent. It's a lot simpler to pretend that Silberman—but not, of course, Tribe, Amar, or Levinson—is a dangerous radical. But it's not healthy. We should seek gun control *and* a Constitution that means something.

Benjamin Wittes

Why we're losing the war of ideas ...

Last November, the U.S. Military Academy's Center for Combating Terrorism published the Militant Ideology Atlas featuring this "Ideological Influence Map." Finally, a clear explanation of why they hate us.



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Hillary's War

The real reason she won't apologize.

MICHAEL CROWLEY

In October 2000, Hillary Clinton was entering the home stretch of one of the most unusual Senate campaigns in American history. Although her husband still occupied the Oval Office, she had decamped to a Dutch Colonial in Westchester County to run for the seat of retiring New York Democrat Daniel Patrick Moynihan. To compensate for the fact that she had never actually lived in the state she intended to represent, she immersed herself in Empire State minutiae. Off the top of her head, she would describe in detail the virtues of the Northeast dairy compact and the rate of upstate job growth. The aggressiveness of her New York provincialism tended to obscure the rare occasions on which Clinton would actually unfurl a broader worldview.

One such occasion took place on October 10, a few weeks before the election, when Clinton spoke before a group of investment bankers, magazine editors, and the sundry wonks who populate the Council on Foreign Relations. Although her address received little attention at the time, it outlined a clear vision of American power, one perhaps better-suited to a candidate for president than for the Senate. Many of the details were anodyne—she implored the United States to lead alliances against global problems like AIDS, poverty, and repression—but, when she came to the use of U.S. military force, her speech took a bracing turn:

> There is a refrain … that we should intervene with force only when we face splendid little wars that we surely can win, preferably by overwhelming force in a relatively short period of time. To those who believe we should become involved only if it is easy to do, I think we have to say that America has never and should not ever shy away from the hard task if it is the right one.

These words, unthinkable for any Democrat to utter today, are revealing of the mindset that led her to support George W. Bush's confrontation with Iraq, a policy choice that has steadily corroded her presidential ambitions. And, even on that day nearly a year before September 11, her words struck one listener as alarming. During a question-and-answer session that followed, an audience member who identified himself as a banking executive rose to challenge her. "I seem to hear that we should pay any price, bear any burden, to spread our way of life abroad," he said. "I wonder if you think that every foreign country—the majority of countries—would actually welcome this new assertiveness, including the one billion Muslims that are out there? And whether or not there isn't some grave risk to the United States in this—what I would say, not new internationalism, but new *imperialism*."

This was perhaps an overreaction to Clinton's point, and she challenged it as "an extreme statement I do not subscribe to." Through the lens of recent American foreign policy, however, her inquisitor's words do have an eerily prescient ring. However accidentally, he had foreshadowed the events that would follow Clinton's infamous 2002 vote granting President Bush the authority to invade Iraq.

Hillary Clinton's entire political identity has become defined by that vote and her subsequent refusal to apologize for it. To most observers, her positioning on Iraq is simply the latest example in a long career of venal political calculation. In a zeitgeist-capturing "Saturday Night Live" sketch earlier this year, an actor playing Clinton appeared on a mock "Hardball" segment. "I think most Democrats know me," the faux Hillary cloyingly explained. "They understand that my support for the war was *always* insincere."

But was it? The truth about how Clinton came to support Bush's war (albeit with reservations), and how she has thought about it since, has always been shrouded in mystery. People *assume* that Clinton is playing politics, that she voted for the war to look tough or because Bush was popular and that she won't apologize now for fear of looking like a flip-flopper. Political observers scour her daily statements—her head-nodding, even, in one recent *New York Times* article—for clues to her thinking. Or they speculate about what she might do in the future. But the key to understanding Hillary Clinton's foreign policy lies in the past. And, as one probes her inner circle and reconstructs her record, an alternative reading emerges: What if the hawkish Hillary of 2002 wasn't just motivated by political opportunism? What if she really believed in the war?

It's hard to get a handle on Clinton's foreign policy. That's partly because it's hard even to get a handle on the identity of her foreign policy advisers. "Look, I don't fucking know!" barks one former Clintonite when queried about whom Clinton relies on. "No one knows!" The topic breeds deep paranoia, as Hillary's campaign has been known to rebuke those who speak publicly without explicit license. The result is a confounding omertà code: Whereas other politicians eagerly expound on their worldviews and policy deliberations, asking Democrats about Hillary's foreign policy consultations sometimes feels like inquiring after Whitey Bulger in Irish South Boston. "Please don't take this conversation as confirming anything," pleaded one person I contacted, who would only identify himself as being in the "very distant, outermost, orbital region" of the campaign. "I don't know how they want us to handle it." Such nervousness is a testament to the continued belief, despite the rise of Barack Obama, that Hillary will probably be the Democratic nominee—and that, if she wins, she'll have an administration full of jobs to fill. "This is one of those subjects where people are disinclined to say anything," explains Les Gelb of the Council on Foreign Relations. "People are very cautious when jobs are at stake."

As a result, it's not easy divining how Clinton thinks about national security in general, much less what factors led to her support for the Iraq war resolution. Her aides allowed me only a fleeting hallway encounter with Clinton herself. So I set out to unravel the mystery by calling dozens of former Clinton officials and Democratic aides. I also dug into her past, from her college career through eight years in the White House and six in the Senate. Sifting through Hillary's life, a portrait begins to

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emerge of a woman who has always been more comfortable with the military than many of her liberal boomer peers. I found that Clinton had aggressively pushed her husband to use force when he was president; that one of her most influential new advisers was a former senior aide to hawkish Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia; and that, although she opposed President Bush's Iraq "surge," she has consulted regularly with one of its prime architects. I even found that, in her late twenties, Hillary Rodham Clinton briefly attempted to enlist in the U.S. Marines.

That last fact—reported in 1994 but largely forgotten since—underlines the degree to which, unlike many of her peers, Clinton has never allowed Vietnam to define her vision of foreign policy. It's true that the war helped pull her from her roots as a Goldwater Girl and a president of Wellesley College's Young Republicans and drive her into the Democratic Party. During her junior year at Wellesley, she even knocked on doors for Eugene McCarthy's antiwar campaign. But Vietnam apparently didn't imbue Hillary with a loathing for the military. In 1975, just months after the last U.S. troops returned home, Hillary was living in Arkansas with Bill, who had mounted a failed bid for Congress the previous year. The young couple, who would marry later that year, were both teaching law at the University of Arkansas, when Hillary, for reasons never made entirely clear, decided to enlist in the Marines. When she walked into a recruiting office in Little Rock and inquired about joining, the recruiter on duty was unenthusiastic about the 27-year-old law professor in thick, goggle glasses. "You're too old, you can't see, and you're a woman," Clinton recalled him saying. "Maybe the dogs"—Marine slang for the Army—"would take you." Deflated, Clinton said she decided to "look for another way to serve my country."

From there, the trail seems to go cold. Hillary's geopolitical opportunities were limited in Arkansas, where she focused on her law career and advocacy on such domestic issues as children's rights. And, when she moved with Bill into the White House in 1993, in contrast to her public stewardship of health care, she had no formal foreign policy role. She was rarely, if ever, present at her husband's official national security meetings, and when she traveled abroad it was typically to promote relatively uncontroversial issues like women's rights and religious tolerance. "My staff used to tease me, suggesting that the State Department had a directive: If the place was too small, too dangerous or too poor—send Hillary," she writes in her memoir, *Living History*.

Behind the scenes, however, Hillary was an important figure in her husband's overseas agenda. "Much more than is usually the case with a first lady, she was interested in and knowledgeable about foreign policy," says Strobe Talbott, a former State Department official and longtime friend of the Clintons. In informal settings, "she was very much a part of the conversation."

That's no surprise, given how close Hillary was to Bill's top foreign policy mandarins. She had bonded with National Security Advisor Sandy Berger years before, while working for the presidential campaigns of George McGovern and Gary Hart, and remained close to Berger and his wife, Susan, ever since. As first lady, she talked regularly with Sandy, who she has said took an active interest in her overseas trips. More recently, in 2001, Susan, a Washington realtor, helped Hillary choose her $2.85 million brick Georgian house and even found her a posh interior decorator.

When Hillary visited a military recruiting office in 1975, a recruiter wasn't impressed. "You're too old, you can't see, and you're a woman."

Hillary was tighter still with Madeleine Albright. Both had attended Wellesley (albeit a decade apart), and the pair famously hit it off on a 1996 trip to Eastern Europe when Albright was still ambassador to the United Nations. News reports painted a portrait of gal pals on a European holiday—window-shopping in Prague, sharing dumplings in a café, laughing hysterically as the wind turned their umbrellas inside-out. Their personal bond reportedly led Hillary to insist that Bill choose Albright for secretary of state in 1997. It also gave Hillary an informal line to America's top diplomat. The women met regularly, often with their top aides, for frank conversations about policy and politics in Albright's State Department dining room. In her memoir, *Madam Secretary*, Albright describes the relationship as an "unprecedented partnership." "I was once asked whether it was appropriate for the two of us to work together so closely," Albright writes. "I agreed that it was a departure from tradition," but she saw no problem with the first lady having a hand on the ship of state.

Perhaps most importantly, Hillary clearly helped to shape some of her husband's key foreign policy decisions. In March 1999, for instance, as Slobodan Milošević's Serbian forces conducted a rising campaign of ethnic cleansing against Kosovar Albanians, her husband considered a series of airstrikes to stop the killing. His generals were nearly unanimous in opposition: Bombing wouldn't work, they said, and, in any case, military engagement wasn't worth the risk of American casualties. Russian opposition also guaranteed a lack of U.N. sanction for the mission; any military action would have to be a NATO operation of debatable international legitimacy. Hillary didn't care. As she later explained to *Talk* magazine, while on a trip in North Africa she phoned her husband in Washington and pleaded with him to unleash the military. "I urged him to bomb," she said. "You cannot let this go on at the end of a century that has seen the major holocaust of our time. What do we have NATO for if not to defend our way of life?"

Bill Clinton, of course, wound up agreeing with his wife. The subsequent 78-day bombing campaign was an astonishing success. The United States suffered zero casualties, and the Serbs capitulated, beginning the process of Milošević's downfall. It was the third time Hillary had spoken up in favor of intervention. The first had been in 1994 in Haiti, according to one former Clintonite. The other had been the 1995 campaign of airstrikes to bring an end to the Bosnian conflict. Her memoir recounts hearing a speech by Elie Wiesel in April 1993 in which he invoked the Holocaust as he pleaded with the president to take action in the former Yugoslavia. "Sitting in the gray drizzle," Hillary writes, "I agreed with Elie's words, because I was convinced that the only way to stop the genocide in Bosnia

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was through selective air strikes against Serbian targets." This was more than two years before her husband finally brought himself to commence the bombing.

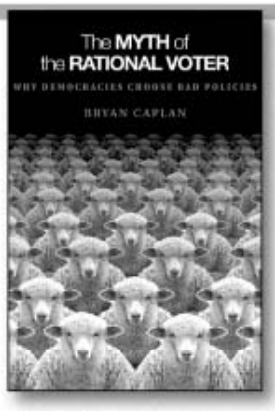
By the end of their reign, the Clintonites seemed to have demonstrated that the United States could flex its muscles with ease and precision—even without U.N. approval—and be loved for it. U.S. bombs had restored peace and stability to central Europe, and American values were on the march. Hillary's memoir recounts her 1996 meeting with an American peacekeeping soldier in Bosnia: "[W]herever we go, the kids wave at us and smile," he told her. "To me, that's reason enough to be here." Not only was it righteous, it held a certain glamour as well. As Hillary recounts in a typical passage, "Sheryl Crow, Sinbad and Chelsea and I flew in Black Hawk helicopters to visit soldiers in forward positions. … Chelsea had been a big hit with the soldiers and their families throughout the trip, shaking hands and signing autographs with her usual warmth and grace." All this filled her with a vivid optimism. On a flight back from the region, she recalls, "I remember thinking what a perfect day it was for flying and what a perfect moment to be alive."

Little wonder that, by 1999, Hillary was proclaiming in speeches, "I am very pleased that this president and administration have made democracy one of the centerpieces of our foreign policy." Or that, during her Senate campaign a year later, she would argue that America's military involvements should not be limited to "splendid little wars."

In the fall of 2002, Bush officials were having their own troubles divining what Hillary Clinton thought about Iraq. Although she was a regular attendee at Capitol Hill briefings conducted by senior administration officials like Colin Powell and Paul Wolfowitz, she listened far more than she spoke, recalls one former Bush official. (She was more open with then–deputy National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley, an old friend from Yale Law School, pulling him aside for private chats.) But in general, says the former Bush official, Clinton seemed more comfortable with confronting Iraq than some other Democrats. "I was kind of pleasantly surprised by her attitude," he says. "Not that she was jumping up and down waving flags and saying, 'Hey, let's go after these guys.' But you take a John Kerry—he would sit back with his arms folded and a skeptical look."

At one point that fall, Clinton visited the White House, along with several other senators, to hear National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice make her case for the Iraq resolution. Once again, Hillary kept her views largely to herself, leading Rice to call her personally afterward. Did the senator have any questions she might answer, Rice asked? Clinton asked Rice for assurance that Bush really intended to push diplomacy to the limit, that the resolution was not a de facto vote for war. On the contrary, Rice said, it was the best hope for peace: Only the clear threat of force could compel Saddam to accept the intrusive weapons inspections that might avert war.

Clinton says now that she took Rice at her word. She expected the administration to make a good-faith effort at diplomacy and to give arms inspectors ample time to do their work. According to her, it did neither. Her critics deride that as a naïve view, of course. A few weeks before, even her confidante Sandy Berger had noted that "the smell of gunpowder" was already in the Washington air. But a vote based on the notion that diplomacy required the threat of force behind it was entirely consistent with the worldview her husband's administration had developed. "I think there is a connection to her vote,"



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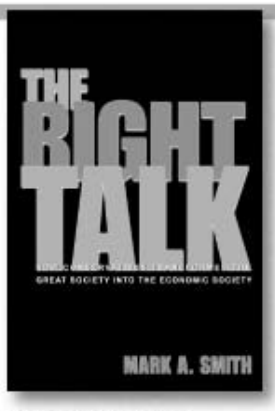

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says James P. Rubin, a former Clinton assistant secretary of state, "which is recognizing that the right combination of force and diplomacy can achieve America's objectives. Sometimes to get things done—like getting inspectors into Iraq—you do have to be prepared to threaten force. But you have to get the combination right. And, in Iraq, Bush got the combination wrong. To get it right means not dispensing with either force or diplomacy."

But, by 2002, some Clintonites seemed resigned to the inevitability of force as a solution. Iraq had been a persistent fly in the ointment during the latter years of the Clinton administration. Few things terrified the Clintonites more than the chemical and biological arsenal they were convinced Saddam possessed. Their phobia was illustrated in 1997, when Defense Secretary William Cohen appeared on television holding up a five-pound sack of sugar to illustrate how a small payload of Saddam's anthrax could kill half of Washington. Late in his presidency, Bill Clinton told one interviewer that the thought of a crop-duster spraying biological agents over the National Mall literally "keeps me awake at night." Thoughts like these led to an ever-more aggressive posture toward Saddam. In November 1998, the president signed the Iraq Liberation Act, making Saddam's ouster a stated goal of U.S. policy for the first time; a few months later, Albright toured the Middle East explaining to Arab governments that the United States was serious about "regime change." When Saddam kicked out U.N. weapons inspectors that year, Clinton ordered Operation Desert Fox, a four-day campaign of bombing and cruise-missile strikes. "So long as Saddam remains in power, he threatens the well-being of his people, the peace of his region, the security of the world," he explained at the time. "The credible threat to use force, and, when necessary, the actual use of force, is the surest way to contain Saddam's weapons of mass destruction program, curtail his aggression, and prevent another gulf war."

Whatever role Hillary played in her husband's Iraq policy remains a mystery. But it's clear that the Clintonites left office deeply frustrated at the unsolved problem of Iraq and perhaps believing that some final reckoning was inevitable. "President Clinton recognized, as did I," Albright writes in her memoir, "that the mixture of sanctions, containment, Iraqi defiance, and our own uncertainty about Saddam's weapons couldn't go on indefinitely."

Bush's approach was clearly blunter than what Clintonite foreign policy would have dictated. But, even as the "smell of gunpowder" turned into a stench, the foreign policy experts to whom Hillary was closest remained supportive of war with Iraq. "Most of the top [Clinton] national security team had sympathy for what Bush decided, in the broadest terms," says a Democratic foreign policy analyst.

A visit to the Balkans with Bill in 1999 reinforces Hillary's hawkish instincts (above). Clinton plants a wet one on her lunch-mate and foreign policy guru, Madeleine Albright.

The most hawkish among them was former U.N. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, with whom Clinton conferred that fall. "If all else fails, collective action against Saddam is, in my view, justified by the situation and the record of the last decade," Holbrooke told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in September 2002. Holbrooke's standard for "collective" seemed to include only the British and perhaps a handful of other allies. And Holbrooke made clear that a war to topple Saddam was unlikely to be easy and that U.S. forces might have to spend years in a postwar Iraq. Nor was Holbrooke alone. Varying degrees of support for the Bush resolution came from the likes of Rubin, former Defense Secretary William Perry, and former Deputy National Security Advisor Jim Steinberg. And, though she raised red flags about the war's risks, Hillary's close friend Albright ultimately concluded that Bush "should have this authority." This was hardly shocking: Albright's relatives had fled both Hitler and Stalin, instilling in her a belief that dictators must be challenged. "My mindset is Munich," she once said. "Most of my generation's is Vietnam." It may have been such thinking that once led Albright to query a stunned Colin Powell, "What's the point of having this superb military you're always talking about if we can't use it?" (In his memoir, Powell recalls, "I thought I would have an aneurysm.")

Hillary also conferred with Kenneth Pollack, the former Clinton national security aide whose book, *The Threatening Storm*, helped convince many Democrats that Saddam could not be peacefully contained indefinitely. (Although, when Clinton bumped into Pollack at Berger's October 2005 birthday party at the French Ambassador's residence in Washington's Kalorama neighborhood, she needled him for his mistaken beliefs about Saddam. "Ken, where are those WMDs you were telling me about?" she said.)

To be sure, policy and politics have always been inexorably intertwined in Clintonland, and, while some close to Hillary made a principled case for supporting the war, others clearly billed it as a political winner. Among them was surely her pollster, Mark Penn, who has been a member of the Clinton inner circle since 1995. The disheveled, Harvard-educated Penn has long been obsessed with the political center. After September 11, he fixated on foreign policy, repeatedly warning Democrats that they needed to show voters that, as he put it

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in one essay, they are "capable of managing national security issues." For Penn, supporting the Iraq war was a fine opportunity to demonstrate this. In the 2004 Democratic primaries, he attached himself to a candidate who believed likewise, joining the ill-fated campaign of Joe Lieberman. According to one former Lieberman adviser, even as Iraq slid toward chaos Penn believed war supporters would be vindicated: "Penn was telling Lieberman he would be right about the war." It hardly seems a stretch to assume he told Hillary Clinton the same thing.

Of course, no Clintonite likely held more sway with Hillary than Bill himself, whose war position has never attracted the same scrutiny. Indeed, befitting the man who said of the 1991 gulf war debate that he "agreed with the arguments of the minority," but "would have voted with the majority," Bill's views on the second Iraq war remain murky. When talk of a confrontation with Iraq first began brewing in 2002, he seemed wary about a possible distraction from the pursuit of Al Qaeda. "I don't have any use for Saddam Hussein," he said in a speech that June. "But I do think you have to ask yourself in what order do we have to do this." But, as the war drums grew louder, he grew increasingly supportive. While he stressed the importance of diplomacy and arms inspections, he seemed to value them more as a way to legitimate an invasion than to avoid one. On October 27, for instance, Clinton said in another speech that "I do think it would be better if we can go through the U.N. and try the inspections, even though if past is prologue, they'll fail." Though he regularly warned against acting without broad support, this, too, seemed less a critique of Bush administration aggressiveness than of U.N. timidity. In a mid-February speech, he told a Texas audience that Bush "deserves a lot of credit for saying we can't just ignore [Iraq] forever; it's time to deal with this again," before going on to argue that the credibility of the United Nations was at stake and urging recalcitrant European countries to show that they were serious about Iraq.

More strikingly, Clinton even seemed to embrace the neocon notion that, by toppling Saddam, the United States might reshape the Middle East. "[I]t's going to take years to rebuild Iraq," he said. "If we do this, we want it to be a secular democracy. We want it to be a shared model for other Middle Eastern countries. We want to do what a lot of people in the administration honestly want, which is to have it shake the foundations of autocracy in the Middle East and promote more freedom and decency. You've got to spend money and work hard and send people there to work over a long period of time." These could have been the words of Paul Wolfowitz. But, to Bill Clinton, this wasn't a blinkered fantasy—it was a legitimate and realistic U.S. foreign policy objective.

Still rotating in Hillary's orbit are many of the Clintonites who advised her prior to the war. "There's no way when you look at who's around her that you can't see it as a continuum" from her husband's administration, says representative and former Clinton White House aide Rahm Emanuel. But, when I pressed Hillary's advisers on the subject of whom she consults on foreign policy, they were eager to portray her—in convenient contrast to, say, Barack Obama and John Edwards—as an experienced foreign policy hand who doesn't need anyone telling her what to think. "This is not like Bush and the Vulcans," explains one, referring to the (supposed) policy titans who schooled the geopolitically clueless Texas governor. By contrast, Clinton advisers note, as first lady she visited 82 nations—each trip accompanied by a detailed briefing. "You'd be hard-pressed to say that there's anyone in this race with that experience," says one. The flattering image presented by Hillary's circle is of a policy mastermind who mainly calls in people with specific expertise when she needs to fill small gaps in her knowledge on particular regions or threats. (I learned the names of some of these experts—uncontroversial figures with high media profiles—but the paranoia in Clintonland runs so deep that I was not given permission to cite them.)

Hillary Clinton still talks regularly with her husband's senior foreign policy team, whose generally hawkish slant may help to explain why Hillary has been far slower than her Democratic rivals to shift left on the war. (It's telling that the three well-known former Clinton foreign policy officials who have signed up with Obama's campaign—former National Security Advisor Anthony Lake, State Department African affairs expert Susan Rice, and Greg Craig, a lawyer and one-time adviser to Albright—are more dovish than many of their old colleagues.) Hillary's campaign still lacks a formally structured foreign policy team, perhaps in part because her lasting personal friendships provide much of the advice she needs. A month after Hillary's election to the Senate in 2000, for instance, Holbrooke hosted a gala dinner for her at his private residence in Manhattan's Waldorf Astoria Towers, featuring attendees like Robert DeNiro and Harrison Ford. When Hillary traveled to Munich in 2005 for a speech about the United Nations, Holbrooke was there, taking notes in the front row. He's also inside enough to have recently solicited recommendations for a new full-time foreign policy aide to join Clinton's campaign. "He's obviously gunning for secretary of state," a Democratic foreign policy expert told me. "He's putting all his eggs in this basket."

Hillary is also still close to her former café-hopping buddy Albright, whom she recently named to a "rapid reaction" team of women who will defend her against attacks in the press. And she is said to confer constantly with Berger, her friend of more than 30 years, who, despite his opposition to the Iraq war, still defends the utility of force. In a 2004 *Foreign Affairs* essay calling for a return to internationalism, he nonetheless noted that "[a] Democratic administration will need to reaffirm the United States' willingness to use military power—alone if necessary—in defense of its vital interests." (That said, some Democrats suggest that Berger's involvement in the campaign will be limited—or at least concealed—thanks to his ham-fisted attempt to smuggle documents from the National Archives in 2003.)

Newer additions to Hillary's fold also suggest that her hawkish profile is about more than just polls. One is her Senate foreign policy staffer Andrew Shapiro. The 39-year-old Shapiro is affable but charged with nervous energy. (Sitting in

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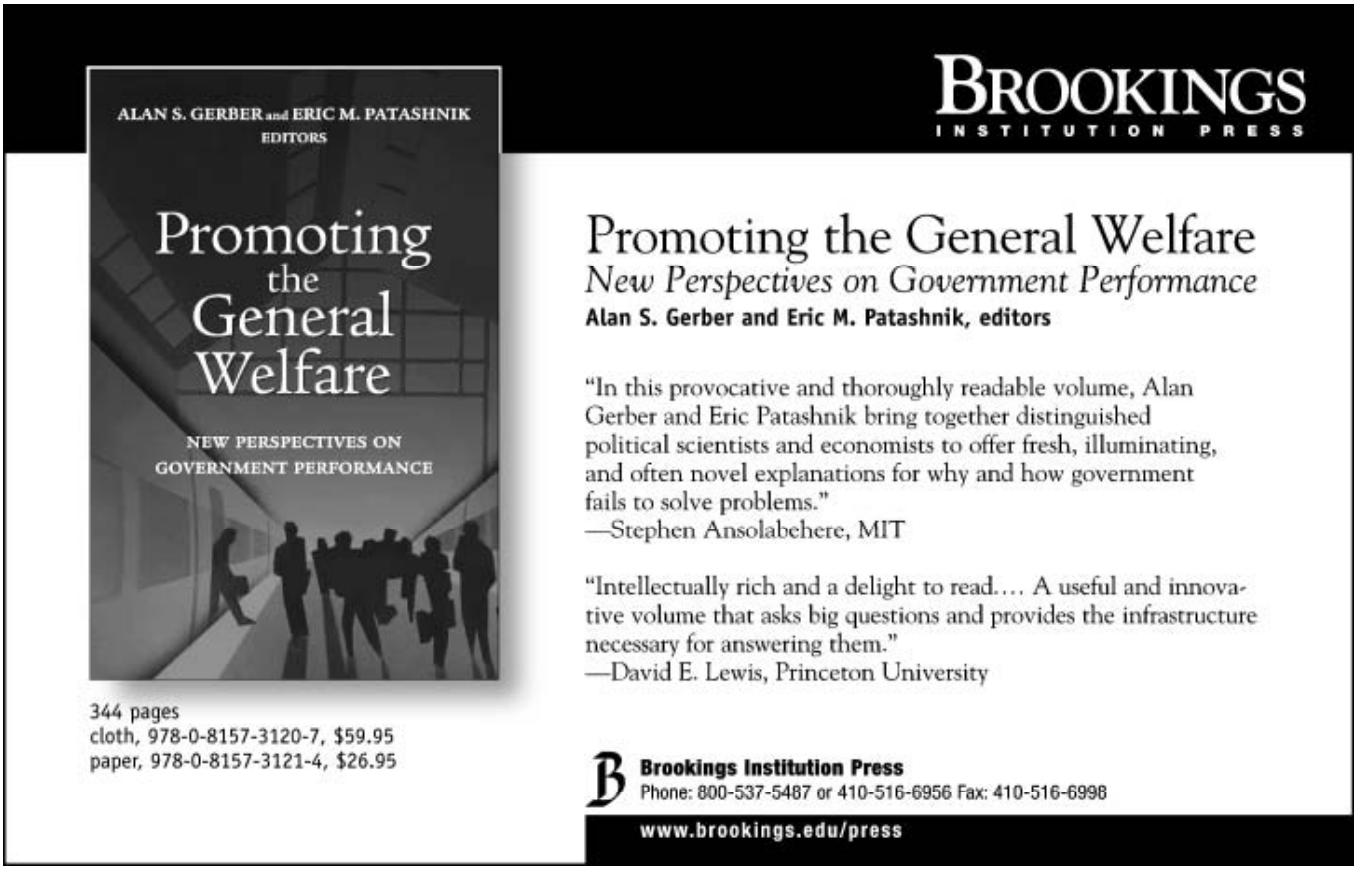
the audience at a recent Clinton speech on the military, he rocked steadily back and forth like Rain Man at Wapner time.) A Gore-Lieberman campaign aide and Justice Department lawyer, Shapiro was also briefly a research assistant at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a center-right think tank. Shapiro is "a mainstream foreign Democratic policy establishment moderate," says a congressional foreign policy aide. "He's hawkish on defense issues and Israel." It is Shapiro, Hillaryites say, who is in the room for most of her important foreign policy decisions.

Hillary has also recruited a new and relatively unknown adviser: longtime defense establishment insider Jeffrey Smith. "When she went on Armed Services, she telephoned me and asked if I would come up and give her a sense of the issues she'd encounter," says Smith, who served as general counsel to the CIA in the mid-'90s and is now a partner at the Washington law firm Arnold & Porter. Though Smith has civil libertarian views on intelligence (he strongly opposes the Guantánamo Bay detainee program), he is a West Point graduate with roots in military culture who spent several years working for Nunn on the Senate Armed Services Committee. During the 2004 campaign, Smith said he had found John Kerry's 1971 charges of U.S. war crimes in Vietnam offensive. Smith has been a harsh critic of the Iraq war from the start, but, like Hillary, he has argued that the United States can't summarily withdraw. "[N]o one should question how difficult—or how important—it is to achieve our mission," he wrote in a 2003 op-ed.

Smith told me he's been surprised at the kinship Hillary finds with military and ex-military men. A case in point is her camaraderie with retired General Jack Keane, a gruff former vice army chief of staff and co-architect of Bush's Iraq "surge" plan. Keane, a New Yorker, contacted his new senator after her 2001 election and offered to keep her up to speed on the state's Fort Drum Army base and military issues generally. In 2003, Keane escorted Clinton on a visit to West Point to address students there. (A private chat about Iraq on the flight home prompted Clinton to take her first trip there two months later.) When Clinton joined the Senate Armed Services Committee in 2002, Shapiro says, Keane was among the first people she contacted. Although Clinton opposed Keane's surge plan, her aides say she still thinks enough of his opinion that she has debated it with him. It's hard to imagine many other leading Democrats would have done the same.

Clinton's aides wouldn't grant me an extended interview with her, but I was afforded a brief, on-the-fly encounter. On a recent March morning, I merged into Clinton's bubble as she left a press conference on children's health care in the Russell Senate Office Building. Even on Capitol Hill, Clinton has massive star power, and it took her five minutes to work her way out of the room in her methodical style, head slowly turning this way and that like a giant radar dish as her pale blue eyes locked onto each new supplicant. Finally, Clinton greeted me warmly as we stepped onto an elevator closed to the rabble by her Secret Service detail.

I had time for two questions. First, I asked her about the influence her husband's foreign policy experience had on her Iraq vote: whether his successful use of force, even without U.N. approval, had shaped her decision. "It certainly did influence my thinking," she told me in her matter-of-fact tone. "What many of us thought was, the use of diplomacy backed up by the threat of force—that is a credible position for America to take in the world." But, she added, "there were those in the Congress who thought that the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In the run-up to war, Richard Holbrooke (left) helped nudge Hillary towards supporting the president—Condoleezza Rice (center) helped seal the deal.

AP PHOTO/GLOBAL BUSINESS COALITION, CHRIS GREENBERG

United States should never even threaten force—or certainly take force—in the absence of U.N. Security Council approval. Well, I had seen during the Clinton administration that sometimes, that's not even possible. Sometimes, it's not even possible for the president to get congressional approval to pursue vital national security interests." This does not sound like someone who, in her heart, had at the time thought George Bush's confrontation was a terrible mistake.

Then we were on the street. Clinton's black sedan was waiting with an open door. Though she was starting to look impatient, I wedged in my second question: What should people make of the fact that she had briefly tried to enlist in the military? At this her eyes narrowed and she threw me a glare of mistrust. "I have very deep and quite broad relationships with people in the military," she said. As for the meaning of the recruiting visit, "I can't tell you," she said with a dismissive wave. "You go look at that." And at that, the door shut, and she was gone, a faint silhouette behind tinted windows.

In her October 2002 speech explaining her vote for President Bush's war resolution, Hillary was clearly conflicted. She listed several reasons why war might be necessary, including the Iraqi chemical and biological arsenal—which she called "undisputed"—and her purported special perspective, as a New Yorker after September 11, on the "risks of action versus inaction." She also offered several counterarguments, including her fear that Bush might make a dangerous precedent of "preemption."

But, in concluding that she would support Bush, Clinton offered another rationale of a very different sort. She argued that she was inherently predisposed to grant the benefit of the doubt to a president asking Congress for support in matters of war. In the '90s, Clinton had watched congressional Republicans undermine her husband's foreign policy for political gain. They mocked his interventions in Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo—Tom DeLay called it "Clinton's war"—and they cried "wag the dog" when he launched a cruise-missile attack on Iraq in the midst of the Lewinsky scandal. "[P]erhaps," Hillary mused in her floor speech, "my decision is influenced by my eight years of experience on the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue in the White House, watching my husband deal with serious challenges to our nation. I want this president, or any future president, to be in the strongest possible position to lead our country in the United Nations or in war."

In short, Clinton was arguing that Congress should have an innate deference to presidential authority in matters of diplomacy and war. As she explained to ABC's George Stephanopoulos in December 2003, "I'm a strong believer in executive authority. I wish that, when my husband was president, people in Congress had been more willing to recognize presidential authority." To this day, when Clinton refuses to apologize for her war vote, she explains that she doesn't regret deferring to Bush's authority, but rather "the way he used that authority."

Thanks to the excesses of the Bush administration, the phrase "executive authority" has a dirty ring to it these days, and Hillary rarely talks much about it in public. But her advisers say it remains a guiding principle of her thinking. It also explains why Hillary, despite the vitriol of Cindy Sheehan and harassment by antiwar protesters, has been so much slower than Democratic primary rivals like John Edwards to call for a swift U.S. withdrawal.

Of course, there is another prominent Democrat, one beloved by the left, who has also shared Hillary's moderation on the question of exiting Iraq: Al Gore. Though he opposed the war full-throatedly, the former vice president has yet to endorse a quick withdrawal, saying that to do so would be to consign Iraq to complete anarchy. Clinton advisers note that the key thing Hillary and Gore have in common is eight years together at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. "On his press tour, Gore sounded like Hillary," says one Clinton adviser. "And it's probably because those two understand the presidency better than anyone." Or, as Les Gelb puts it, "She thinks more like a president than a candidate."

Ultimately, perhaps the strangest thing about Hillary Clinton's war vote is that she actually seems to have related to George W. Bush's predicament. She remembered the feeling of being in the White House, looking at a dangerous and unstable world, and imagining that the United States had the power to make it safer and more humane. She knew the feeling of having a powerful military on call. She not only believed that Saddam had WMD, but also that, by deposing him, the United States could promote freedom and democracy.

Those beliefs made Clinton receptive to Bush's arguments for war, even if it was almost certainly not one she would have initiated. But the final straw for her decision may have had less to do with a vision of U.S. power than with a vision of herself. She had seen her husband in Bush's shoes, confronting a Congress that didn't trust his foreign policy leadership. And she knew that, someday, she might find herself in those same shoes as well. In that sense, for Hillary Clinton, supporting the Iraq war may have been as much about her future as it was about her past. ◆

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Suffering from Chronic Pain? For Solutions, Read On...

Up to 30 million Americans suffer from under-treated chronic pain.[1] Families suffer with them. For most, suffering is completely unnecessary.

Problem: Medical schools do not provide sufficient curriculum time to pain management nor do most residency programs.
Solution: Encourage medical schools to prioritize teaching pain management per "best practice" as recommended by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)[2] and also provide educational workshops for physicians already in practice.

Problem: Even when properly informed, doctors are often afraid to follow "best practice" guidelines for patients who require large amounts of medication or even to accept pain patients out of fear of being targeted by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).
Solution: Seek another doctor if your prescription fails to relieve your pain. If you are unable to obtain adequate medication, complain to your senators and congressman and urge them to investigate the DEA's failure to respect "best practice" and persecution of conscientious physicians. (Conscientious physicians tend to attract extreme chronic pain sufferers, and hence prescribe greater quantities of opioids in general and huge doses to some patients as warranted. Thus they attract the scrutiny of overzealous DEA agents and prosecutors who either don't understand "best practice" or are seeking headlines to divert attention from their overall failure to prevent wide scale criminal diversion of licit and illicit drugs.)

Problem: Many patients suffer needlessly because they are either too stoic to complain or they mistakenly fear addiction.
Solution: Educate patients about the importance of reporting unrelieved pain, and make them aware that opioid treatment is rarely addictive.

Problem: Loved ones often underestimate the debilitating effects of chronic pain and discourage taking dosages as prescribed.
Solution: Involve family members in pain treatment consultations. Make them aware that their loved one's pain affects the entire family and can be successfully treated medically.

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1) "Pain Facts: An Overview of American Pain Surveys," American Pain Foundation, from the web at http://www.painfoundation.org/print.asp?file=Library/PainSurveys.htm, last accessed Nov. 22, 2005.
2) Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations on Pain Management, from the web at http://www.jcaho.org/news+room/health+care+issues/jcaho+focuses+on+pain+management.htm, Nov. 22, 2005.

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Freaks and Geeks

How Freakonomics is ruining the dismal science.

NOAM SCHEIBER

One of the few papers I actually read as a grad student was written by a pair of economists named Josh Angrist and Alan Krueger. In the early '90s, Angrist and Krueger set off to resolve a question that had been gnawing at economists for decades: Does going to school increase your future wages? Intuitively, it seemed obvious that it did. When you compared the salaries of, say, Ph.D.s with those of high-school dropouts, the grad-school set almost always did better. The question was whether education accounted for the difference. What if it was simply the case that smarter people spent more time in school and that their bigger salaries reflected intelligence, not education? One couldn't be sure. The only way to get to the bottom of it would be a ghastly social experiment, wherein you took a group of students and randomly sent half to the local vo-tech institute while forcing the other half to study feminist literary theory. Even an economist wouldn't be so audacious.

That's where Angrist and Krueger came in. In the paper, they pointed out that two features of the public school system allowed you to answer the question without all the uproar. First, most states force students to attend school until age 16. Second, for many decades, students started school the year they turned six. The upshot was that, if I were born in January and you were born in December of the same year, and we both dropped out at 16, then the rules forced you to stay in school almost one year longer. (We'd start school the same year, but I'd turn 16 midway through tenth grade and you'd hit 16 midway through eleventh.) The additional schooling foisted upon one group by this arbitrary state of affairs produced a scaled-down version of our experiment, allowing Angrist and Krueger to conclude that education did, in fact, help people earn more money.

I probably first came across this paper in 1999. At the time, it struck me as a neat trick, certainly a welcome diversion from the stultifying technical literature economists must imbibe, but largely unremarkable beyond that. Three years later, having escaped the academic track, I was nonetheless spending a lot of time in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where I moonlighted as an economics poseur and consorted with the smartest young economists in the world. And one of the things I was shocked to learn was that Harvard grad students had invested the Angrist and Krueger paper with totemic significance.

It quickly became apparent that the way to win acclaim as a grad student was to devise a similarly ingenious method of tackling a problem. Several years after his paper on schooling, Angrist no-

singing cowboy laryngitis rate
goldfish sales in Toronto
green parrot speech defect increase
cab driver altercation rate
Vacuum cleaner sales to divorced Presbyterians
Asian-born gum-chewers decline
stolen garbage can return rate in Piqua, Ohio
mango spoilage rate in Maui
mismatched sock-wearers' increase
lobster trap rentals (Brazil)
Red-headed shoplifter arrests in Utah
Parallel Parking mishap rate
pajama vs. non-pajama wearers
bowling shoe rental rates - Pittsburgh
scooter sales decline
pet turtle death rate
necktie width 1996-2006
allergy-driven surfer migrations
tetherball death rate
ladder accidents per capita
candelabra murders
Blackberry addiction crisis
double-dip vs. single-dip ice cream sales
BRONZEADO
Portuguese tanning salon bankruptcies
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ticed that the Armed Forces Qualifying Test had been misgraded for a few years in the late '70s. This had opened the doors to thousands of subpar applicants and allowed Angrist to compare the lucky underachievers with the people rejected once the glitch got corrected, thereby isolating the impact of military service on wages. The practical effect was to send the grad students scrambling to find other instances in which life-altering decisions had been handed down incorrectly. In 2000, a Harvard professor named Caroline Hoxby discovered that streams had often formed boundaries to nineteenth-century school districts, so that cities with more streams historically had more school districts, even if some districts had later merged. The discovery allowed Hoxby to show that competition between districts improved schools. It also prompted the Harvard students to wrack their brains for more ways in which arbitrary boundaries had placed similar people in different circumstances.

Every few weeks, when a student would stumble onto some new test-grading error or fatefully drawn boundary—what economists call "instruments"—word of the discovery would rocket through the department. The discoverer would become instantly, if momentarily, famous, like the holder of a winning card at a Bingo hall, and inspiring the same mix of reverence and jealousy. A typical conversation around the snack machine at the National Bureau of Economic Research, where many Harvard students had cubicles, went something like: *Hey, did you hear that so-and-so found this crazy example of excess tax refunds in western Manitoba in the early '60s?* At which point the other would reply, *Uh, no, wow, that's, uh, great*, and then scamper back to his desk to brainstorm for some similar quirk of public policy. At an age when most people brood that life is too random and arbitrary, these people's biggest complaint was that it wasn't random and arbitrary enough.

In retrospect, I have come to see this as the moment I realized economics had a cleverness problem. How was it that these students, who had arrived at the country's premier economics department intending to solve the world's most intractable problems—poverty, inequality, unemployment—had ended up facing off in what sometimes felt like an academic parlor game?

With the 2005 publication of *Freakonomics*, the breezy exposition of Chicago economist Steven D. Levitt's oeuvre, the rest of the world has come to see that economists are capable of spectacular feats of cleverness—and to a degree I couldn't imagine back in my poseur days. In the search for what's known as "clean identification"—a situation in which it's easy to discern the causal forces in play—Levitt has turned to such offbeat contexts as Japanese sumo-wrestling and the seedy world of Chicago real estate. He has studied racial discrimination on "Weakest Link," a once-popular game show, and reflected on the scourge of white-collar bagel-filching. This has, in turn, inspired a flurry of imitators, including papers on such topics as point-shaving in college basketball, underused gym memberships, and the parking tickets of U.N. diplomats.

Within the frequently tedious body of economics scholarship, these papers stand out as fantastically entertaining. Judging from the dizzying sales of *Freakonomics* and the thousands of lecture halls across the country now bursting with econ majors, they've also been wildly successful at ginning up interest in the discipline. But it does make you worry: What if, somewhere along the road from Angrist to Levitt to Levitt's growing list of imitators, all the cleverness has crowded out some of the truly deep questions we rely on economists to answer?

It would be wrong to pretend that this cleverness problem only dates back a decade or two. Academic economics has sometimes valued ingenuity above usefulness since at least the Second World War. In 1996, days after winning the Nobel Prize in part for a theoretical model he'd pioneered in the '60s, Columbia economist William Vickrey confessed that the paper's practical contribution was next to nil. "At best, it's of minor significance in terms of human welfare," he told *The New York Times*.

Still, for more than a generation, it was mostly theorists like Vickrey who had a monopoly on cleverness. The early postwar empiricists—that is, the people who dealt with real-world data—were, for the most part, earnest, stubborn men. They tackled the era's thorniest questions with a freakish determination. Harvard economist Zvi Griliches devoted decades to the problem of productivity growth, the chief determinant of rising living standards. His colleague Simon Kuznets spent half his career devising the measure of economic growth we still use today. If these men sometimes gave the impression that economics was a life-and-death proposition, well, that was no accident. *Life* to them was a life-and-death proposition. Griliches had survived the Holocaust. Kuznets had endured the German occupation of his native Ukraine.

By the '80s, however, the data-crunchers had come down with a crisis of confidence. In one famous episode, the eminent economist H. Gregg Lewis reviewed several studies on unions. What he found was alarming: Some papers reported that unions strongly increased wages; others reported exactly the opposite. The difference, in most cases, was simply the assumptions the authors had made.

Critiques like this tipped the discipline into a prolonged bout of soul-searching. The old approach had been sweeping in its ambition. But what good were ambitious goals if the best you could do was "on the one hand/on the other hand"–style equivocation or, worse, plain gibberish? "People didn't believe the estimates being produced," recalls David Card, then a rising star at Princeton. "They felt the evidence in economics was not very credible." Economists had long aspired to science. Suddenly they faced a harrowing thought: What if they were no better at pinning down truth than the average critical studies major?

Having glimpsed this nihilistic vision, many economists ran screaming in the opposite direction. They concluded that the path to knowledge lay in solid answers to modest questions. Henceforth, the emphasis would be on "clean identification," on sorting out what caused what.

The early practitioners of this approach—Angrist, Krueger, Card—had well-earned reputations as crafty researchers. But, by and large, all three men used their creativity to chip away at important questions. It was only in the late '90s that the signs of overreach became apparent. To some professors at top departments, clean identification became a fetish. "Almost every student, myself included, had the terrible experience of getting up in front of the [professors] for whom identification is the Holy Grail, and getting cut to shreds when your identification strategy doesn't pass muster," recalls a recent Harvard Ph.D. The problem is that there are only so many big questions that misgraded tests or arbitrary boundaries can shed light on. If you're wedded to these techniques, eventually they lead you in obscure directions. "People think about the question less than the method," says Berkeley professor Raj Chetty, one of the most sought-after Harvard graduates in recent years (and a notable exception to this trend). "They're not thinking: 'What important question should I answer?' So you get weird papers, like sanitation facilities in Native American reservations."

Many young economists began shunning big questions altogether. Jim Heckman, a Nobel Prize–winning labor

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economist at the University of Chicago, illustrates the point with a story. A few years ago, he struck up a conversation with a promising assistant professor. Before long, Heckman began to gripe that economists lacked a comprehensive measure of all the obstacles a child might face in life—education, nutrition, family environment, and so on. There was no way to tell if childhood disadvantages were getting better or worse.

He encouraged the young economist to produce such a measure. "You're absolutely right. It's paramount, of first-order importance," the woman replied. But there was zero chance she'd pursue it. "It would take years to do," she explained apologetically. The woman had clearly made the right career decision: No one coming up for tenure could afford that kind of time while her colleagues published a stream of small-bore papers. On the other hand, says Heckman, "How long did it take Madame Curie to purify radium? Two or three years? If she was somehow told, like the grad students in our program, 'If you can't solve the problem in a week or a month, drop it,' a lot of big problems would have been dropped."

Heckman's allusion to a certain pedagogical technique is almost surely a shot at his Chicago colleague, Steve Levitt. Levitt has been known to discourage students from laboring too long on a question for which the data are unlikely to produce a useful result. "I've always been someone who's thought it's better to answer a small question well than to fail to answer a big question," he says. This much should not be surprising. Levitt is the product of the same environment that birthed the clean-identification movement.

After graduating from Harvard and doing a brief stint in management consulting, Levitt earned a Ph.D. from MIT in 1994, completing the program in a mere three years. "In the early '90s, if you had a really great natural experiment, as we called it, you'd get yourself a job," he says. Levitt, it turned out, had many. While still a student, Levitt wondered whether money drives election results or if the better candidate simply raises more money. He ingeniously demonstrated the latter and published the results in a top journal. Another early paper found that a slight increase in the chance of arrest dramatically deterred auto theft. Levitt discerned this by studying cities that had approved the use of Lojack, a transmitter that leads police to stolen cars. In 2001, Levitt published what is probably his most controversial finding to date: a paper highlighting the connection between the legalization of abortion in the '70s and the falling crime rates of the '90s. Levitt argued that unwanted children are most at risk of becoming criminals. Abortion, he concluded, lowered crime rates by reducing unwanted pregnancies.

Some of these papers made genuinely important contributions. The Lojack paper helped demonstrate that theft is a fundamentally rational phenomenon and can therefore be discouraged. This insight alone might have justified Levitt's John Bates Clark Medal, a prize awarded every two years to the most outstanding economist under 40. But, at times, Levitt gave the impression he was more interested in clever techniques than answers to questions. In a 1997 paper, for example, Levitt argued that hiring more police decreases crime, a proposition for which there was surprisingly little evidence. (The fact that municipalities expand police departments when crime rates rise tends to muddle the picture.) To prove it, Levitt needed to simulate an experiment in which the size of a police force was randomly increased. His solution was to exploit the fact that mayors often hire more police officers in the run-up to an election. The only hitch, as a grad student later pointed out, was that mayors up for reelection don't actually hire many police officers, at least not enough to show that they lower crime.

Whatever the flaws in this study, they were clearly the product of too much ambition, not too little. A few years later, however, Levitt debuted a new kind of paper: an investigation into offbeat phenomena from daily life. One of the earliest examples pondered the strategies soccer players employ when taking penalty kicks. Another paper studied corruption in sumo-wrestling tournaments as a window onto the power of incentives. Not long after, Levitt conducted an exhaustive inquiry into "Weakest Link," a game show in which contestants voted to remove a player after each round of trivia questions. Tallying the voting data revealed that contestants were discriminating against Latinos and the elderly but not blacks and women.

In some respects, the papers were just an extreme version of the Harvard approach—an attempt to shrink a question down to the point that you can answer it. Except that, in Levitt's case, the question hadn't just shrunk. It had traveled several hundred miles from its original starting point. Take the "Weakest Link" paper: While the game show did provide a pure setting for observing discrimination, there was no reason to think we could extrapolate from "Weakest Link" contestants to, say, hiring and promotion decisions, where discrimination often intersects with economics. Set aside the fact that the logic governing "Weakest Link" votes may be completely different than the logic that reigns in the typical HR department. The bigger problem is that most hiring and promotion decisions don't take place in a Hollywood studio before a national TV audience.

Levitt is charmingly, almost painfully, self-effacing when you mention these reservations. "There's no question I have written some ridiculous papers," he says. By way of explanation, he draws an analogy to the fashion industry: haute couture versus prêt-à-porter. "Sometimes you write papers and they're less about the actual result, more about your vision of how you think the profession should be. And so I think some of my most ridiculous papers actually fall in the high-fashion category."

Predictably, not every economist buys this rationale. Not even every economist at Chicago, where Levitt's influence over grad students (whom he attracts), young faculty (whom he helps recruit), and the prestigious *Journal of Political Economy* (which he co-edits) have aroused the ire of an older generation of researcher.

Easily the most famous of the dissidents is Heckman. If Levitt is known for his novelty, the hallmark of Heckman's work on such issues as education and job training is its painstaking attention to detail. A few years ago, Heckman was rumored to be so upset over the direction of his department that he began looking to leave. Chicago had never been an ideal place to do empirical work. Nobel Prize–winning theorists like Gary Becker and Robert Lucas disliked dirtying their hands with data. Now the department was finally warming up to data-crunchers … and they were the kind Heckman deemed useless. "Chicago has been a little disappointing in that it hasn't been more firm in rejecting cute and clever," he laments.

Not that Heckman has been shocked by the development. It is sometimes said that healthy departments have a straightforward division of labor: The theorists generate predictions, and their colleagues test them with data. Alas, this process can be a drag for the people being scrutinized. It's much more fun to generate pie-in-the-sky predictions when you don't have some killjoy looking over your shoulder. Which is why, from the perspective of the theorists, the ideal colleague may be someone less fastidious. Someone who studies the offbeat and clever, not the discipline's central questions. Someone who, you might say, looks less like Jim Heckman and more like

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Steve Levitt. "Rigorous theory and bullshit empirical work can co-exist," Heckman sighs. "It leaves the rigorous theorists to make up the numbers they want."

Each year, the Harvard economics department invites a handful of eminent scholars to participate in its Political Economy Lecture Series. Standard operating procedure is for the speaker to discuss some new paper or avenue of research. Previous speakers have held forth on such eye-glazing subjects as "Rule Rationality versus Act Rationality" or "Equilibrium Contracts for the European Central Banker." In the spring of 2002, Harvard landed Levitt.

Levitt doesn't immediately strike you as a mesmerizing speaker. His voice is too high, except when it's trailing off at the end of a sentence. He leans heavily on the word "OK." He is lanky and concave-chested and often fails to make eye contact. But Levitt has a droll magnetism, a certain anti-charisma. Combined with his eclectic interests, it made the Harvard talk a hit.

Levitt framed his discussion as a how-to guide for practicing oddball economics. "He talked about his kick-ass creative papers, kind of a prelude to *Freakonomics*," recalls one person in attendance. "Here are the lessons you can draw to improve your own research, how you can do clever, appealing papers yourself." As he was wrapping up, Levitt reflected on the choices facing grad students: *If you think you can do as well in traditional topics as someone like Marty Feldstein*—a giant of the profession—*you should pursue that*, he said, at which point knowing laughter broke out. *But*, he continued, *if you don't feel like you're up to that, you might want to think about alternative topics*. The message resonated loudly. One student watched classmates spend the next several weeks on high alert for some curiosity of daily life around which they could build a paper.

If Levitt were literally holed away in some ivory tower, emerging only every so often to distract economists from their thoughts about growth and inequality with another clever curiosity, he would undoubtedly be a force for good in the profession. It is not exactly earth-shattering to learn that sumo wrestlers respond to incentives like the rest of us or that soccer players behave strategically. But it's not completely trivial, either. The occasional confirmation of economic theory in contexts people can relate to may even act as a check against excess in the other direction—against useless esoterica. It would be far more disturbing if we *never* observed such behavior in these settings.

But if one Levitt is desirable, two may be pushing it, and more than that might be a problem. Which makes it somewhat alarming that, between his academic success, his popular acclaim, and his personal charm, Levitt may be shaping a generation of young economists.

One growth industry in recent years has been what you might call the lookie-here paper: a small-scale setting for observing some broad principle of economics. Many of these papers deal with sexy topics like corruption and, well, sex. One top journal recently published a paper deducing that Iraq had received billions in kickbacks from rogue buyers under the Oil-For-Food program. Another recent paper, this one in the *Journal of Political Economy*, demonstrated that johns in Mexico pay prostitutes more for unprotected sex than sex with a condom. Both of these findings may be of journalistic interest. But the fact that Saddam Hussein would try to profit from a scarce commodity, or that people might pay extra for services they value more, will surprise no one who has opened an economics textbook lately.

A companion class of papers boast similar ambitions, but with one small difference: Instead of demonstrating all the offbeat places in which the standard economic model applies, they demonstrate where it breaks down. The first generation of so-called behavioral papers vastly enriched our understanding of how real human beings make decisions, as opposed to the constantly maximizing automatons of economic theory. Economists William Samuelson and Richard Zeckhauser famously observed that people have a huge bias in favor of the status quo, which sheds light on why, for example, they fail to enroll in 401(k)s.

But subsequent generations of behavioral work have increasingly focused on the picayune. One recent paper in a top journal, *The American Economic Review* (*AER*), documented how people pay hundreds of dollars to belong to gyms they visit infrequently. A forthcoming *AER* paper finds that catalog shoppers overindulge in cold-weather clothing when the temperature abruptly drops. These papers invariably predict that such irrationality will recur in more meaningful contexts—for example, in decisions about jobs or home purchases. Maybe. On the other hand, maybe the only reason people behave irrationally when buying snow boots is that *no one gives a damn about snow boots*. At least not the way they give a damn about their jobs and houses.

Unquestionably, much of what's driving this descent into "cute-o-nomics" is the burst of media attention now devoted to economics papers. "It's very clear that the incentives are to try to do work that gets some public attention. To some extent, that work gets accepted in top journals. You can't blame kids for doing it. I wouldn't blame Levitt," says David

The Cute-O-Meter

Ranking the top six cute-o-nomics findings

	Chances you'd read about it in *Slate*	Surprising?*	Irrelevance to ending world hunger	Overall cuteness score**
Mexican men pay prostitutes a premium for unprotected sex	8	3	6	5.67
Nigerian diplomats run up lots of parking tickets in New York City	10	1.5	6	5.83
People buy too much winter clothing from catalogs when it's cold outside	6	2	10	6
Sumo wrestlers sometimes throw matches when the stakes are low.	7	4.5	7.5	6.33
Stock traders aren't sharp on Fridays because they're distracted by the weekend	10	1	8.5	6.5
People pay too much for gym memberships they don't use.	9	1	10	6.67

** A score of 1 is mathematically equivalent to the word "duh" ** Standard errors available upon request*

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Card, now of Berkeley. But people like Card sometimes worry about the consequences. "It is exactly like postmodernism in the humanities," he groans. "What is there to say about Beethoven anymore? … Every moron can't understand technical orchestration, doesn't know the history of music. So you write about him having a gay affair with his nephew."

Sadly, Card isn't far off. A few years ago, Levitt supervised a Ph.D. student named Andrew Francis, who now teaches at Emory University. The paper Francis took with him into the job market was called "The Economics of Sexuality: The Effect of HIV/AIDS on Homosexual Behavior, Desire, and Identity in the United States." In it, Francis attempted to demonstrate that certain homosexual men become heterosexual when AIDS is widespread. Granted, there is a legitimate, if sometimes tawdry, literature examining the way sexual behavior responds to disease. But Francis wasn't talking about changes in behavior—less promiscuity, greater condom use, etc. He was talking about changes in *sexual orientation*.

This last may look like a different trend than the bull market in lookie-here papers—more economic imperialism than Harvard-style empiricism. It's not so much that Francis had dreamed up a clever context in which to get at a mainstream question. It's that he'd brought economics to bear on a distinctly noneconomic phenomenon, one far more likely to be governed by the forces of biology and psychology than supply and demand. But, in a way, this style of research has also been enabled by the techniques practiced in Cambridge and refined by Levitt. The new imperialists have vast confidence in their ability to extract causality from data. This confidence has, in turn, sometimes led them into territory best left to other disciplines.

Perhaps the most infamous example is a paper written by a recent Harvard Ph.D. named Emily Oster. While still an undergraduate, Oster had become fascinated by the so-called "missing women" problem—the hypothesis, attributed to Amartya Sen, that gender discrimination in Asia has created a vast shortage of women. In some cases parents abort daughters, in some cases they commit infanticide, in some cases they simply don't care for their daughters as diligently as they should. Whatever the cause, Sen has suggested there could be as many as 100 million "missing women" in countries like China, India, and Pakistan.

Years later, while wrapping up her Ph.D., Oster stumbled onto a seemingly unrelated fact: a small medical literature suggesting that women with hepatitis B were far more likely to give birth to boys. What followed was a series of sophisticated natural experiments, the upshot of which was to demonstrate that 100 million women hadn't gone missing after all. Instead, unusually high rates of hepatitis B had arranged it so that Asian mothers were producing far more boys than nature's track record would suggest.

It was a fabulously compelling result, one that partially absolved whole societies of lurid crimes against their children. It was also a vindication of the *Freakonomics* worldview. Levitt published Oster's paper in the *Journal of Political Economy*. He and his *Freakonomics* co-author, Stephen Dubner, took to the pages of *Slate* to breathlessly retell her "economics detective story." And then, just as suddenly, it all fell apart. A snot-nosed grad student from Berkeley pointed out that hepatitis B couldn't possibly explain the missing women problem. It turned out Asian women gave birth to daughters at the same rate as women everywhere else, at least during their first pregnancy. It was only during subsequent births that the ratios changed. Either a bunch of Asian women were running out to get hepatitis B in between their first and second pregnancies, or, as Sen feared, people were taking dramatic steps to avoid ending up with two girls.

In a sense, the split between people like Jim Heckman and Steve Levitt is a split between the nerds and the clevers. The nerds complain that Levitt and his ilk are so far removed from using meat-and-potatoes economic theory they may as well be practicing journalism. "In some quarters of our profession, the level of discussion has sunk to the level of a *New Yorker* article," Heckman griped in a 2005 interview with the Minneapolis Fed. "The authors of these papers are usually unclear about the economic questions they address."

The clevers deny that their research turns its back on economic theory. They complain that the nerds insist upon a kind of sadomasochism that does little to advance the cause of knowledge but makes them feel like they're doing God's work. "The structural Gestapo out there acts as if it can't be useful if it's not hard or complicated. We should have a middle ground," Levitt told me.

All of which may just be garden-variety academic squabbling, except that Heckman does raise a valid point. One of the statements Levitt has become famous for since *Freakonomics* is his observation that "economics is a science with excellent tools for gaining answers but a serious shortage of interesting questions." What is one to make of a discipline that heaps scorn on its own raison d'être?

This question turns out to be particularly poignant for someone like me. As a grad student, I was constantly torn between my own prurient interests and the belief that real economists tackle noble but boring subjects. My first shot at a thesis topic was a model of something I pompously dubbed "extended adolescence": basically, how it is that certain members of my generation get to piss away their twenties before settling on a career. (And, more to the point, why this slacker behavior should be subsidized.) When that didn't pan out, I drifted to a slightly more conventional but still narrow question about whether prison labor leads to higher wages once convicts rejoin society.

Finally, with time running out and no luck pinning down data, I settled on a genuinely important topic: how new technologies displace old technologies, using mass transit as a case study. I somehow convinced a man named Paul David to supervise the project. David, in addition to showering me with the patience and generosity of a parent, was arguably the world's foremost expert on technology adoption. Our collaboration taught me what it means to do serious, careful research.

It also happened to be one of the most tedious experiences of my life. So tedious, in fact, that previously tedious exercises—like reading scholarly works of history or *The New York Review of Books*—suddenly seemed like pleasant diversions. Increasingly, I felt oppressed by the prospect of spending years on some intractable problem. I chafed at the obligation to do "socially useful" work. I wanted the freedom to pursue whatever seemed interesting and to drop whatever didn't. Journalism, it turned out, was *precisely* what I wanted to practice. Maybe then I could tap my economics training in the highly seductive manner of a Malcolm Gladwell or a Michael Lewis, not wear it around like a hair shirt. How ironic, then, that academic economics was making room for us lightweights at the very moment I decamped for journalism. How scary.

When I raise this issue with Levitt, he is almost apologetic: "There needs to be a core for work on the periphery to make any sense. I don't think we would want to have a whole profession with dilettantes like me out doing what I do." But, in nearly the same breath, he adds: "The simple fact is that it's hard to do good research. … To the extent that you can do interesting research that teaches us something about the world, and entertains along the way, that's not so bad." ◆

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There are 193 countries in the world.
None of them are energy independent.

So who's holding whom over a barrel?

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Global Oil Flows
Who's News • Career Jou
LACE
OBJECTIVES
& EFFICIENCIES
ENERGY IMPORTS BY OIL EXPORTING COUNTRIES
GASOLINE
ELECTRICITY
NATURAL GAS
COAL
Saudi Arabia
Russia
Norway
UAE
Nigeria
WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE
– DIVERSIFY ENERGY SUPPLIES
• FIND MORE TRADITIONAL FUELS
• DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES AND RENEWABLES
– FOSTER OPEN MARKETS & TRANSPARENCY
– ENCOURAGE CONSERVATION/ ENERGY EFFICIENCY
The fact is, the vast majority of countries rely on the few energy-producing nations that won the geological lottery, blessing them with abundant hydrocarbons. And yet, even regions with plenty of raw resources import some form of energy. Saudi Arabia, for example, the world's largest oil exporter, imports refined petroleum products like gasoline.
So if energy independence is an unrealistic goal, how does everyone get the fuel they need, especially in a world of rising demand, supply disruptions, natural disasters, and unstable regimes?
True global energy security will be a result of cooperation and engagement, not isolationism. When investment and expertise are allowed to flow freely across borders, the engine of innovation is ignited, prosperity is fueled and the energy available to everyone increases. At the same time, balancing the needs of producers and consumers is as crucial as increasing supply and curbing demand. Only then will the world enjoy energy peace-of-mind.
Succeeding in securing energy for everyone doesn't have to come at the expense of anyone. Once we all start to think differently about energy, then we can truly make this promise a reality.
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Chevron Steps Taken:
• Investing over $15 billion a year to bring energy to market.
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Projected Global Oil Demand
2004 DEMAND
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2030 DEMAND
115 mbpd

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Ruble Rousers

The poison-and-caviar world of Russian oligarchs in London.

KIM MURPHY

London, England

One night last June, 400 A-list guests and several packs of wolves descended upon Althorp, the ancestral home of the late Princess Diana. The guests—who included Orlando Bloom, Elle MacPherson, and Salman Rushdie—had been invited to attend a fund-raiser for the Raisa Gorbachev Foundation, which helps childhood cancer victims in Russia. The wolves, who were led about the estate on leashes, had been hired to provide ambiance—specifically, that of a "Russian midsummer fantasy." Creating a tableau that, according to the London *Times*, not even "Keith Richards at the creative summit of his hallucinogenic powers could have conjured up," the wolves and celebrities were joined by a bejeweled camel, Cossacks on dancing horses, people in eighteenth-century costumes sitting in trees like a "scene from a Watteau painting," and—for a touch of contemporary flavor—U2's Bono, via video link from Dublin, and the hip-hop group the Black Eyed Peas. After a dinner that included jellied borsch with smoked sturgeon and golden Osetra caviar, the guests took part in a charity auction, bidding for prizes: a private dinner with co-host Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow; a flight in a MiG fighter jet; and, for those yearning to experience the tough love of the Putin regime, a night in a Russian maximum-security prison.

This extraordinary party, wolves and all, was underwritten to the tune of $2.3 million by Alexander Lebedev, a former KGB spy who now owns one-third of Aeroflot-Russian Airlines. The elder Lebedev maintains his primary residence in Moscow, but his 26-year-old son Evgeny went to British schools and now lives in the upscale neighborhood of Knightsbridge. The Lebedevs are part of a new generation of Russians who have invaded London, rippling Britain's aristocratic classes more than any group since the Arab sheiks arrived in OPEC-fueled limousines in the 1970s. These days, the main dining rooms at the Ivy and Cipriani are as likely to be tinkling with Russian as English. London real estate agents have estimated that 20 percent of all houses sold for over $10 million are sold to Russians. Of those sold for over $30 million, the figure climbs to 50 percent. "Today, effectively, the Russians are the richest buyers we've got," says Trevor Abrahamson of Glentree Estates.

Mikhail Gorbachev joins Evgeny Lebedev (right) for a night of wolves and Czar power.

But, while London is awash in Russian oligarchs, the party at Althorp wasn't. Among those missing was 40-year-old Roman Abramovich, Britain's second-wealthiest resident, who bought the Chelsea football club for $233 million in 2003 and is underwriting its $200 million-a-year payroll. The perpetually unshaven college dropout, known as "Roma" among his fellow Russians, shuttles between Moscow and a $54 million townhouse in Belgravia, a $10 million townhouse in Knightsbridge, and a 440-acre estate in West Sussex that once belonged to the late King Hussein of Jordan, complete with two polo fields, a rifle range, and a go-kart track.

Also absent was Abramovich's former business partner, Boris Berezovsky, who presided over a vast automobile and media empire until President Vladimir Putin charged him with fraud and embezzlement and he fled the country for political asylum in Great Britain. Berezovsky's own list of posh properties—which include an $8 million flat in Belgravia (registered to his daughter); two more in Kensington Gardens; an eight-bedroom, seventeenth-century Stanley House in Chelsea; and another estate in Surrey—puts him in the same rarefied billionaires' club as Abramovich. But the two are unlikely to appear together at a party. In 2005, Berezovsky accused the younger oligarch of buying out his shares too cheaply in Sibneft, the Siberian oil company, after he was forced to leave the country. These days, they communicate mainly through their lawyers. There is also a political subtext to their feud—one that highlights the astonishing degree to which these Russians remain intimately involved in life back home. Abramovich remains, on Putin's nomination, governor of the northeastern Russian region of Chukotka, and he is on cordial terms with the Russian leader. Berezovsky, on the other hand, has morphed into Putin's biggest nightmare: a sworn enemy with a big mouth, wads of cash, and a liberal agenda.

DAVE BENETT/GETTY IMAGES

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The strained relationship between Abramovich and Berezovsky is not unique. In fact, according to Alexander Terentyev, a former Russian TV editor who is researching the Russian migration phenomenon at the London School of Economics, the oligarchs move in separate, often secretive circles. They can frequently be seen traveling the city in blacked-out Mercedes, surrounded by coteries of ex-SAS bodyguards. Because of this factionalism, Evgeny Lebedev, who chairs the Raisa Gorbachev Foundation and co-hosted the party at Althorp, said he didn't succeed in persuading a single Russian oligarch to attend the benefit. "Russian wealthy people seem to be quite interested in their own causes, and not very helpful toward others," the younger Lebedev explained to me after returning from Oscar-night partying in Los Angeles. "That seems to be a problem with Russian society as a whole, not just philanthropy. People, at best, don't help each other; and, at worst, they make it worse for each other. They compete with each other."

But, as with Abramovich and Berezovsky, the reasons why London's Russian oligarchs tend to go their own ways range deeper than disputes over cheaply purchased oil shares or divergent preferences for charities. In many ways, they are competing to shape Russia's future.

Eight months ago, I arrived in London after three years of living and working as a reporter in Moscow. I was lonely for *pelmeni* dumplings with sour cream, for the soul-scorching folk songs of Zhanna Bichevskaya, and for long winter nights drinking and smoking and arguing at kitchen tables till dawn. Although cool Britannia seemed like an unlikely setting for these emotion-filled Russian pastimes, I had heard that perhaps 300,000 Russians now lived there, at least part-time, and so I held out hope. But what I quickly realized was that London's Russians eagerly blended in with the culture of their British hosts. They had created no ethnic enclaves (unlike, say, the Pakistanis or Somalis), gravitated toward quintessentially British, upscale areas like Bond Street or Ascot Park or neighborhood financial pubs in the City, and were more likely to be eating sushi than borsch. In fact, it was easy to forget they were even there until last November, when former KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko died after ingesting, apparently at a piano bar in Mayfair, a colossal dose of radioactive Polonium-210.

Suddenly, the biggest Russian news story of the past several years, one that shined a harsh new international spotlight on the character of the Putin government, was taking place not in Russia, but in London. London's hidden Russian community began to come out of the woodwork: The newspapers were filled with quotes from resident ex-KGB spies like Oleg Gordievsky, and there was speculation that Litvinenko had been killed because of his associations with Berezovsky or because he had been involved in dealings with London's Chechens. The Litvinenko murder revealed that Britain has quietly become not only the single greatest center of Russian capital outside Moscow, but a turbulent seat of Russian opposition.

This isn't the first time London has played host to Russians dreaming of a new political era. On a winter day, I went to visit Highgate Cemetery, where Litvinenko's grave lies in a locked, fenced-off quarter. Highgate's winding byways, with their mossy tombstones and spooky Gothic mausoleums, seem destined to act as paths of pilgrimage for those with a point to make in faraway Russia. First, there is the towering monument to Karl Marx, who spent the latter years of his life in London, penning the revolutionary tomes that eventually helped bring down the czarist government. Vladimir Lenin would have paid his respects here as a young revolutionary; the office where he briefly edited the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party journal was only a few miles away. Now in a slightly less imposing locale, but already greening under the relentless drizzle of a London winter, there is the grave of Litvinenko with its lead-lined coffin, attracting its own sporadic stream of family and friends.

Litvinenko was no Marx; the *Kapital* that the communist ideologue warned about is thriving in today's Russia. Thanks to the booming oil market, last year Russia had the largest state budget surplus of any nation in the world, and it is sitting on gold and currency reserves that have now reached $303 billion. But by last year, according to the Bank for International Settlements, Russian citizens had stashed $220 billion in banks abroad, particularly in Great Britain—more, in fact, than all the money on deposit inside Russia itself. The fact that so many are heading for the exits—or, at least, setting up their children or spouses abroad and putting their capital in British banks—says much about the level of confidence among those whose billions Russia needs for rebuilding its disastrously crumbling infrastructure, building new production in less oil-dependent sectors, and maintaining a robust tax base.

Looked at another way, though, it may be that the growing links between the Russian power elite and one of the most liberal, international cities on earth will ultimately lead to a more democratic Russia. "So many people now have this double life between Britain and Russia," explains Terentyev. "This experience can't help but influence the Russian development, and in a Western direction."

In 2004, not long after the Russian government arrested Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the CEO of Yukos, then Russia's biggest private oil company, London was treated to the spectacle of 100 silver limousines parading past the Russian Embassy. Timed to coincide with the preliminary hearings in Khodorkovsky's case, they tied up traffic in the central city for an hour. The only man with enough money to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to annoy the Russian government, and the motive to do so, was the original limousine liberal, Boris Berezovsky.

Berezovsky has used the elegant confines of his office in Mayfair as a platform for waging war on Putin's government. And it is a war. In an interview with Russia's Echo of Moscow radio station in January, the tycoon announced he had been working on a coup plan for the past 18 months to replace the "anti-constitutional regime" in Russia with "a coup, a forced seizure of power." (Later, he backtracked, saying he was talking about a bloodless seizure of power like the Rose and Orange revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine, which, of course, the Kremlin fears even more than a military coup.)

On a recent afternoon, I went to Berezovsky's heavily guarded office. Traces of Polonium-210 had been discovered there, and, after the clean-up, his staff had reupholstered two deep, pillowed chairs in front of his desk. I avoided the chairs and sat on the sofa instead, next to a statue of a small bronze panther leaping at three terrified horses.

Berezovsky is a dark, intense, balding man with a seemingly endless supply of murky conspiracies up his sleeve. He speaks in broken English, fractured partly by his heavy accent and partly by the cell phones and urgent knocks on the office door that continually distract him. During our visit, he told me he is convinced the Kremlin is behind Litvinenko's murder.

Berezovsky isn't the only one who subscribes to this theory. Putin has created a state so intolerant of opposition that it is possible to imagine that a dissident was murdered by his government in the heart of London with a radioactive isotope. He has presided over the greatest rollback of human rights since the communist era.

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His government has sanctioned the arrest, torture, and murder of countless Chechens, while leveling their capital virtually to the ground; it has rolled over the press and failed to convict anyone for the murders of at least 13 journalists since Putin came to power in 2000. He has installed KGB veterans at nearly every significant level of government and allowed the security services to become a massive, corporate empire. And, in doing so, he has made himself and his government a target for reform-minded London oligarchs like Berezovsky.

But Putin's motives—and missteps—are more complicated than their portrayal in the Western press. Often forgotten in the international outcry over Khodorkovsky's arrest is the fact that the former Yukos executive, like some of the oligarchs currently living in Britain, made his billions by plundering the nation's industry after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 1995, Khodorkovsky's Menatep Bank acquired Yukos from the state for a mere $350 million; two years later, the company was valued at $9 billion. Putin had the support of many ordinary Russians, living subsistence-level existences, when he rose up against the oligarchs and reasserted state control over key sectors of the Russian economy. He also rebuilt much of the nation's tax base and checkmated Khodorkovsky's plan to sell off Yukos, and possibly Sibneft, to Western oil companies.

Putin's attempts, however, to keep Russian capital in the country—and in state hands—backfired. The government takeover of Yukos was just one in a series of rollbacks on private investment that made foreign banks and London real estate look like comparatively safe cocoons for Russian capital. In addition, the ruinous $27.5 billion tax bill imposed on Yukos—and the shady sale of its main production facility to state-controlled Rosneft—sent troubling signs to Western investors. In the end, the government's across-the-board moves against private property rights had the opposite of their intended effect, nearly quadrupling capital flight in 2004. (In 2005, the trend had reversed and Russia had a net positive capital inflow for the first time in years.) Great Britain became an especially attractive destination because it allows foreign residents to structure their accounts so that they can ferment offshore, unmolested by British taxes.

Russia is currently a rich country, with oil at $60 per barrel. The oil stabilization fund alone stands at $103 billion, and Russia has paid off its $22 billion foreign debt on a stepped-up schedule. A few oligarch billions in Britain represent barely a speck of dust on Putin's lapel. But, if oil prices fall to $25 or $30 a barrel, Russia's geopolitical heft could evaporate overnight—and the billions parked in Russian oligarchs' London real estate, yachts, Boeings, and helicopters, and in their bank accounts and investments around the world, could leave the country without the tax base or productive capacity to dig itself out of a calamitous hole.

Abramovich, the reigning czar of London's émigré community, is trying to prevent this scenario by continuing to invest in Russia. And, while he spends an increasing amount of time in Great Britain and has installed his children in British schools, he says he considers Moscow his primary residence. Although most of his oil and aluminum holdings have been sold off, last year his London-based Millhouse Capital acquired a 41 percent stake in the Russian steel smelting conglomerate Evraz Group, effectively returning $3.1 billion in capital to Russia and setting the stage for assembling a major new Russian metals conglomerate with the Kremlin. Abramovich, unlike Berezovsky and Khodorkovsky, has been careful not to step over the clear line Putin drew for Russia's oligarchs shortly after his election: Keep your ill-gotten gains, but stay out of politics. In his rare public statements, he is careful not to criticize the state of Russia's democracy. When Putin early this year signaled his desire for the oligarch to continue pouring millions of dollars of his own money into the impoverished Chukotka province as its governor—an effective social tax of mammoth proportions—Abramovich did just that. His skillfully managed relationship with the Kremlin has allowed Abramovich to not only continue investing in Russia but to magnify his holdings by stunning proportions.

For Berezovsky, on the other hand, Great Britain serves as a secure—and even inspirational—launching pad for his reform movement. "This country is the greatest world democracy today, where you feel really independent of the executive and court system," he tells me. "It's completely different from Russia. So many businesspeople in Russia are under pressure of the state, under pressure of security services, and so on."

Like Abramovich's position, Berezovsky's is not without a large element of self-interest. As illustrated by a photo on his office wall of himself talking confidentially into Boris Yeltsin's ear, Berezovsky was once the godfather of the oligarchic family that helped launch Yeltsin and select Putin as his heir apparent. Though he clearly has come to believe in the importance of democratic reform, he also stands to regain much of his lost financial empire if he succeeds in undermining Putin's powerful grip.

The Litvinenko murder has provided Berezovsky with the perfect shiv to attack his former protégé. During our interview, he advanced the theory that Andrei Lugovoy, the former Russian KGB agent who had tea with Litvinenko on Novem-

Roman Abramovich (inset) and one of his modest English dachas. Below, oligarch-cum-liberal Boris Berezovsky gets in the head of his nemesis Vladimir Putin.

DAVID GODDARD/GETTY IMAGES (TOP); SERGEI ZHUKOV/AFP/GETTY IMAGES (INSET); REUTERS/PETER MACDIARMID

Kim Murphy is a London correspondent for the Los Angeles Times.

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ber 1, poisoned him at the Kremlin's behest. (Lugovoy claims he is a fellow victim, not a perpetrator.) "One day before the first of November, on the thirty-first of October, Mr. Lugovoy—who now is suspected to be the killer—he was sitting in this room in front of me, and we drank wine with him. And he had no less chances to poison me in this office where we are present now than to do the same in the hotel, putting polonium to a cup of tea of my friend Alexander," Berezovsky says, leaning forward intensely and nodding toward the poisonous chairs.

Why then, I ask, didn't Lugovoy try to kill *him*? Wasn't he a meatier target? "It's very good question," Berezovsky says, lapsing into characteristic mystery. "I have more or less clear answer … myself to this question. But I can't tell you what it is right now."

Berezovsky has very real reasons to fear the Putin government. Not least among them is that extraditing him and forcing him to face trial on charges of fraud and embezzlement has held one of the top places on Russia's diplomatic agenda with Great Britain. Putin's rush to get Berezovsky back to Russia may also have something to do with the zeal of his reform movement activities. From Great Britain, Berezovsky has funded a series of human rights groups, soldiers' mothers groups, and press-freedom organizations inside Russia. He adopted the name of the nineteenth-century dissident Alexander Herzen's newsletter, *Kolokol*, or Bell, for the Internet newsletter he published until recently through his New York–based International Foundation for Civil Liberties, though he claims it's not a direct reference to Herzen. In March, a major opposition protest broke out in St. Petersburg, with several thousand demonstrators chanting "Shame!" as they marched through the streets, before many were clubbed and dragged away to jail by the police. Some were carrying banners in support of Berezovsky, news agencies reported.

Berezovsky claims his biggest project was pouring as much as $50 million into the Orange Revolution to counter the Kremlin's campaign to keep Ukraine within Russia's orbit. (President Viktor Yushchenko denied getting any money from the London tycoon—it would have been illegal under Ukrainian law—but Berezovsky's people say the Kremlin was spending "billions" on the other side.) His support for the Orange Revolution was directed not at Ukraine, he says, but to inspire Russian activists "to help Russia move to democracy."

Berezovsky is one of a trio of figures—Litvinenko was another, along with Chechen resistance leader Akhmad Zakayev—who have formed the backbone of the London-based opposition to Putin's government that seeks to discredit the Kremlin and mobilize international support against the war in Chechnya. "People say that we're out to make trouble for Putin. But we're saying that of course we're here to promote democracy and human rights. And what that means is in the eye of the beholder," says Alex Goldfarb, a longtime Berezovsky aide and friend of Litvinenko who is co-writing a book about the former KGB agent's death with his widow, Marina.

Litvinenko supplied the names, birthdates, and photographs of the skeletons in Moscow's closets to Berezovsky and others, thanks to his contacts with former colleagues at the FSB. He made his first big splash in London with a book claiming that the FSB had engineered a series of deadly apartment bombings in Russia during the run-up to the 2000 elections, an allegation Kremlin spokesman Dmitri Peskov has said was "a product of an ill brain." Lately, however, his revelations about corruption and violence in the Russian halls of power had become so frequent, and often so outrageous, they had begun to fade into background noise. Last July, Litvinenko amazed even his friends when he riffed off the much-photographed kiss Putin had planted on the bare belly of a five-year-old boy, publishing an article on a website linked to the Chechen rebels claiming that videotapes existed within the FSB's internal security directorate of Putin having sex with underage boys. No hint of documentation supported the claim. Most people ignored it. But Goldfarb believes it could have been the last straw, the one final irritation out of London that, only a little more than a year before Russia's crucial 2008 presidential elections, put a teacup full of polonium in Litvinenko's hands.

The Litvinenko episode may have done more than just thrust London's shy Russian community into the spotlight. Berezovsky, for one, believes that it's contributed to a newfound sympathy for his gospel of undermining Putin and making sure he isn't able to hold onto power, or handpick a successor, in 2008. "When I came to London in 2001 and made a lot of public presentations, trying to explain that Putin was starting to destroy Russia, ninety-five percent of the audience didn't believe me," he says. "And, now, I present the same arguments, the same understanding, for sure based on new facts, and ninety-nine percent of the audience accepts now my position."

But Berezovsky tends to play much better in London than he does in Russia—or even, for that matter, among the rest of the Russian expatriates, many of whom see his campaign for "reform" as a bold front for rehabilitating his financial empire and big business domination of the government back in Russia. Putin encourages this view. When asked recently about the Litvinenko case, he turned almost immediately to the London oligarchs. "They are people hiding from Russian justice for crimes they committed on the territory of the Russian Federation—first and foremost, economic crimes," he told reporters. Many in Russia likewise see the forays of Berezovsky and other businessmen into Great Britain (and the United States and Israel) as leaving home with the household icons in their suitcase. "Tell me this. Is it good for Nigeria whether its millionaires are all in London? Is it? Then why do you ask me if it is good for Russia that its millionaires are in London?" says Boris Kagarlitsky, director of the Institute of Globalization Studies in Moscow. "This is an excellent liberal idea—that what is good for the money is good, full stop, even if people have to die for it. They keep saying, 'There is no good way to use this money in Russia.' And that's exactly right: Let people die and not spend a penny, because it is more profitable [to spend it] somewhere else," he said. "What we need in Russia is we need to rebuild the entire infrastructure of this country, which was totally neglected for twenty years. The electricity systems are falling apart, even the elevators in the apartment houses are falling apart. Will you make a lot of profit out of rebuilding that? Of course not. Where if you go to the London stock exchange, you will make millions."

What Kagarlitsky has put his finger on is not all that surprising: The oligarchs are ultimately less interested in shaping Russia's future than their own. London has become a place where they can play out their fantasies, preferring to run with the wolves on English estates rather than from Putin back at home. But they're not the only ones. Many of those who no longer have the Kremlin's ear, including even former members of Putin's own administration, are quietly stashing their nest eggs in London. "Most Russians don't want to be identified as having a safe haven," said one banker familiar with the Russian community. "They all want to be seen as happy patriots in their own country. But … they're all scared. Because, in Russia, one day you're in, and the next day you're out. There's no rule of law. Anything could happen." ◆

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

CRIMES REVISITED

On the morning of August 24, 1927, a few weeks before I started high school, I read the headlines in *The New York Times* announcing the executions of Sacco and Vanzetti. I knew something about their story—newspapers and magazines had been brimming with controversy over it ever since I had been able to read—and my parents and their friends had often discussed it. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the matter, I thought, at least the story is now finished. Last week I saw a new documentary about the case.

Peter Miller, who has worked with Ken Burns, made *Sacco and Vanzetti* because he feels that the red scare of the early 1920s has an analogue in current fears and jingoism. Even though the story is not much of a parallel with our current miring in mendacity, it shocks in two ways: it shows us how recently, relatively speaking, racial and political prejudices were openly allowed to smirch justice; and it makes us take a look at the vitality of liberalism now. Would such an outrage cause an equivalent storm today?

Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were Italian immigrants in Massachusetts, a shoemaker and a fish peddler, who had become anarchists. In 1920, when a paymaster and a security guard were murdered and robbed in South Braintree, the two anarchists were hustled into guilt for the crimes. (Vanzetti was also tied to another robbery, was tried—under the same judge who later sat on the trial of both men—and was flimsily found guilty.) The trial for the South Braintree crimes attracted international attention because it was blatantly clear that the two men were being framed and railroaded for their political views. Other than the Rosenberg case, no American trial I know of has become such an international issue since then. Intellectuals and artists around the world—Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, and Bertrand Russell among them—protested the Sacco and Vanzetti proceedings and asked for a new trial. But after all the court maneuvers and appeals over seven years, all the protests and demonstrations, the two men were electrocuted.

TOMASZ WALENTA

Many artists have used the case as a subject. An Upton Sinclair novel, a Ben Shahn painting, two plays by Maxwell Anderson, and an opera that Marc Blitzstein was writing when he was killed, are only some of the results. These facts are intrinsically relevant: but, in my view, the most notable works that grew out of the trial were the letters of the two men and their addresses to the court, which were collected and published soon after their deaths. They had not known much English when they were arrested; they learned the language during their seven-year imprisonment. (Tony Shalhoub and John Turturro read bits of the letters on the film's soundtrack.)

From Vanzetti's statement when he was sentenced to death: "If it had not been for these things, I might have lived out my life talking at street-corners to scorning men.... Our words—our lives—our pains—nothing! The taking of our lives—lives of a good shoemaker and a poor fish-peddler—all! The last moment belongs to us—that agony is our triumph." Walter Lippmann said of the letters that "if Sacco and Vanzetti were professional bandits, then historians and biographers who attempt to deduce character from personal documents might as well shut up shop. By every test that I know of for judging character, these are the letters of innocent men."

SACCO AND VANZETTI
First Run

THE WIND THAT SHAKES THE BARLEY
IFC First Take

ZODIAC
Paramount

The whole history of the case is much more complicated, legally and otherwise, than the above summary; books on the subject, pro and otherwise, have multiplied over the years. Miller's film is certainly not encyclopedic, but it is sufficiently full for its intent. In conventional but competent style, he blends old newsreels and photos, intercut by interviews with current historians and with descendants of the victims and (in Italy) of the two principals. He brings into new being a story that is still healthfully discomfiting to remember.

Two other films, not documentaries, also revisit past crimes. Ken Loach, who has spent much of his directing career investigating political messes, takes another look at the Irish Troubles. A television series called *Days of Hope* was made in 1975; *Hidden Agenda* came in 1990. Now there is *The Wind That Shakes the Barley*. (This hazardous title comes from an Irish patriotic poem by Robert Dwyer Joyce.) The material is very familiar: films dealing with Irish revolt against British occupation are hardly novel. Even the split among the rebels themselves, after the treaty with England was signed, was filmed not long ago. *Michael Collins*, with Liam Neeson as "the Big Fellow," came through in 1996.

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Loach's one claim to originality has made big trouble for him. His film begins in 1920, and very soon it plunges graphically into the brutality of British solders attacking rebels and suspects with a violence that presumably has truth in it because of the objections that these scenes have raised in the British press. I can't remember equivalent savagery in any other film on this subject. Few have said that the violence is false; most have argued that there was no need to dig into it again—particularly at this time.

But Loach makes a point of showing that violence is not any nation's monopoly. After the treaty was signed in 1921 creating the Irish Free State as a British dominion and retaining the six northern counties for Britain, a splinter group of Irish absolutists battled those Irishmen who had signed and agreed. Violence, especially ghastly because it was between Irishmen, soon followed, and dissident Irishmen were imprisoned in camps. I knew one such man in his later years—Frank O'Connor, the masterly author, who said: "The Free State Party … accepted the treaty with England, and the Republicans … opposed it by force of arms, as the Irgun was later to do in Israel."

These final scenes give a twist, a special irony, to a picture that, convincingly made though it is, seems a bit familiar all through. Loach's cast fits perfectly, and his directing has his usual extra tang of commitment. He provides almost a sensory response to his material: we seem to feel the textures and scent the air. Here he depends, rightfully, on the cinematography of Barry Ackroyd. All the agonies and brutalities in this film take place in a country that is exquisite, seemingly created for peace. The leafy lanes and thatched cottages are used by Ackroyd unostentatiously: there is a constant contrast between what life ought to be here and what it is.

Zodiac is about the serial killer who roiled the San Francisco area in the 1960s, who may still be alive and, if so, is obviously still at large. The screenplay by James Vanderbilt is based on two books by Robert Graysmith, who is himself a character in the film, played by Jake Gyllenhaal.

Quite apart from its virtues, which are few, this (nearly) three-hour picture proves yet again that the public has two insatiable appetites: for the bustle of newspaper offices and for the bustle of detectives' offices. (Turn on your television set tonight, virtually any channel.) Graysmith was a political cartoonist on the *San Francisco Chronicle* who became hooked on the killer's story as his paper covered it and who eventually followed it on his own for years.

"Years" is the operative word. The story begins with a double assault in 1969 and, so far as it can be proved, is not yet over. David Fincher, the director, dots his film with subtitles that mark the dates of each sequence, as if such specifics were essential. Most of the time they are merely trite grabs at urgency and importance, as such gimmicks so often are. Fincher thus dresses up his already-known interest in sanguine territory: *Seven* relished mutilation, and *Fight Club* reveled in the physical extremes latent in seemingly conventional men. But *Zodiac* has little to distinguish it from the yard-goods directing of countless comparable films and broadcast series.

The screenplay just keeps going until it stops. At one point, pretty far along, someone asks Graysmith why he keeps on pursuing this story, since he is neither a detective nor a reporter. He says honestly that he needs it. The search has apparently become a part of his being. It is not, however, a part of our beings. The picture tries hard for addictive mystery, but it is full of scenes that promise insight and don't deliver.

This is by no means the fault of the three leading actors. Gyllenhaal always manages to present a person of some sensitivity without leaning on actorish resources. As the detective chiefly involved in the case, Mark Ruffalo, simply by a kind of frankness, lifts the role out of a cliché into a truly existent man who has a profession and is practicing it. The surprise, which ought to be the wrong word, is Robert Downey Jr. as a reporter who quits the *Chronicle* after several disappointments. In between Downey's too-rare appearances we tend to forget that he is one of the most gifted actors in American film. His performance of the title role in *Chaplin* was insufficiently appreciated; his opportunistic television performer in *Natural Born Killers* was even more grossly disregarded. Here Downey makes this reporter a man who can count on our understanding how he feels about the world he is in.

These three films that visit (and revisit) actualities of murder are members of an ancient line. Ever since the Greeks, these revisitings have been part of drama. We can infer that, from Athens onward, if we know that the killings really happened, we enjoy them more. ◆

Robert Brustein on Theater

LOST IN THOUGHT

As a captive member of Tom Stoppard's audience over the years, I have often felt less like a spectator sitting at a play than like a retired learner taking courses at an adult extension school. In the last three decades, this playwright has lectured us on A. J. Ayer and logical positivism (*Jumpers*); on Tristan Tzara, Vladimir Lenin, James Joyce, and literary-political exile (*Travesties*); on Byron, Hobbes, Newton, Fermat, and hydroponic gardening (*Arcadia*); on A.E. Houseman, Walter Pater, Benjamin Jowett, Oscar Wilde, and male love (*The Invention of Love*); even on the minor characters of Shakespeare (*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*). In his latest course offering, an epic trilogy called *The Coast of Utopia*, Stoppard is giving instruction in the entire history of Russian Idealism, as represented by six major figures of the prerevolutionary intelligentsia.

THE COAST OF UTOPIA
Lincoln Center

Eric Bentley once rattled the theater world by conceiving of the playwright as thinker. I wonder what he would call Tom Stoppard—the playwright as teaching assistant? Shaw added prefaces to his published plays, Pirandello included "premises," Strindberg gave us forewords, and Brecht a "Little Organon." Stoppard provides reading lists. But while the great modern dramatists generally channeled their dramatic ideas into strong characters and engrossing stories or (in the case of Beckett) powerful metaphors, Stoppard's theatrical process seems more like a Wikipedia search than an act of imagination.

There are a number of excellent scholarly studies on the Russian idealists. Stoppard generously credits his secondary sources, E. H. Carr and Isaiah Berlin, as "two authors without whom I could

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not have written these plays." I'll say. This acknowledgement has resulted in a run on the bookstores for dog-eared volumes of Carr's *The Romantic Exiles* and Berlin's *Russian Thinkers*. Reading these books leaves no doubt that the world of Michael Bakunin, Nicholas Stankevich, Ivan Turgenev, Nicholas Ogarev, Vissarion Belinsky, and especially Stoppard's central character, Alexander Herzen, is a potential goldmine of theatrical material. The question is, how successfully has the playwright converted his research into viable dramatic action? Having now completed the entire eight-and-a-half-hour course and bibliography, I suggest that you study the syllabus, do the assigned reading, and bag the lectures.

What accounts for this curious scholastic development in recent British drama, a body of literature that, whatever its achievements in wit and style, has never before been particularly noted for its pedagogy? Compare the first generation of contemporary English playwrights—Noël Coward, Ben Travers, Frederick Lonsdale, Benn Levy, and Terence Rattigan. Far from highbrow mind games, their genteel plays were more like tempests in a teacup about underheated marriages and overcooked venison, in which the kitchen, chamber, and garden help appeared on stage mainly to tip their caps or flutter their aprons. (This brand of theater is still being remaindered by Alan Ayckbourn.)

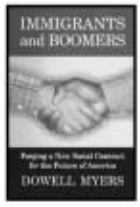
And compare the second wave of modern English drama, General John Osborne and his army of Angry Young Men and Women—Arnold Wesker, John Arden, Shelagh Delaney, Joan Littlewood, Howard Brenton, Edward Bond, and, some would say, Harold Pinter. Most of these militants were Marxists, some of them closet conservatives. But although many were concerned with recording changes in the English class system, none was particularly interested in dramatizing ideas or declaiming ideological positions. By replacing the Loamshire aristocracy with characters from the Midlands and the London East End, the Angries celebrated the energy, the shrewdness, and the regional accents of the working classes, meanwhile waving a nostalgic goodbye to the fading British Empire.

The present generation of British dramatists—led by the Czech-born Tom Stoppard, and including Michael Frayn and David Hare—is the first (apart from Shaw, who was Irish) to explore the world of the postgraduate classes. All three have been primarily engaged with profiling philosophical, scientific, or political luminaries—the physicists Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg (Frayn's *Copenhagen*); the West German Chancellor Willy Brandt and his East German spy nemesis Gunter Guillaume (Frayn's *Democracy*); George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, Condoleezza Rice, and Tony Blair (David Hare's *Stuff Happens*); the leaders, settlers, artists, and insurrectionists of Israel and Palestine (Hare's *Via Dolorosa*); and so on.

As a result, British playwrights, once hailed for their style, technique, or edginess, are today being praised for their facility with ideas. Frayn, a journalist and novelist who evolved into a dramatist, has evolved further into a historian of physical science, having just published a quite impenetrable work (at least to my physics-resistant brain) called *The Human Touch*. In this five-hundred-page tome, subtitled "Our Part in the Creation of a Universe," Frayn examines the most complex scientific mysteries of the day, including quarks, quasars, quantum theory, and other quondam quiddities.

Considerably more literary in his interests, Stoppard, in *The Coast of Utopia*, continues to pursue his infatuation with nineteenth-century ideas, this time electing a major in Russian intellectual history (with a minor in dramatic structure). Each play begins with Alexander Herzen, lost in thought, sitting suspended in a chair

SOCIAL SCIENCE THAT MATTERS



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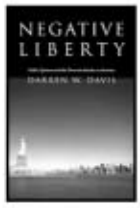

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aloft, as the names of the central characters are dropped upon a scrim. This is entirely appropriate to a play that never stops name-dropping or, more accurately, idea-dropping. Admittedly, Stoppard has one sustaining idea of his own: that Utopia (meaning the political idealism that leads to a socialist revolution) is a country toward which many different boats have headed without being able to land on solid ground. It is an unimpeachable, if overworn, idea; liberals have been rightly insisting upon it for half a century. Stoppard's big Eureka is suggested in his title, which treats the concept of utopianism as a sea-going metaphor, and also in names of the three plays in the trilogy—*Voyage*, *Shipwreck*, and *Salvage*—which are all nautical warnings about the perils of political travel.

Shipwreck climaxes with an actual disaster at sea: the sinking of a passenger vessel sailing from Marseilles to Nice. Included among its passengers are Herzen's mother and his young deaf-mute child, Kolya. The tragedy eventually results in the death of Herzen's wife, Natalie, in childbirth, and leads Herzen, after questioning the whole concept of revolutionary utopias, to conclude that no one is in a position to control the happiness of others if he cannot control his own. This shipwreck is one of the few physical events in the play that actually dovetails with an idea. Indeed, it may be a structural fault of the entire trilogy that it treats international politics and domestic life as two parallel tracks (or sea lanes) that rarely intersect.

But Stoppard has always had difficulty with the emotional lives of his characters, and *The Coast of Utopia* is no exception. There is something anemic and undernourished in the constitutions of these people, particularly those who are always espousing high philosophical concepts. Stoppard is perfectly capable of recycling Berlin's insights into the link between German Idealist philosophy and Russian revolutionary theory, but he is less successful in channeling the contribution of Carr, who managed to relate these theories to the inner lives of the characters. For Carr, the personal and the philosophical do not exist in separate compartments. His "exiles" draw their personal experience from their philosophy, turning formulas into feelings and systems into an individual metaphysics. As Herzen once wrote in a letter, "I even think that a man who has not lived through Hegel's *Phenomenology* and Proudhon's *Contradictions of Political Economy*, who has not passed through that furnace and been tempered by it, is not complete, not modern." This sounds impossibly abstruse on the surface, but looked at carefully it represents a living relationship with ideas on the part of a thinker who can forge the most generalized theory into something clear, concrete, and immediate. By contrast, Stoppard's Herzen rarely shows signs of life below his talking head.

Herzen also wrote that Romantic idealism was "Romanticism for the heart and Idealism for the head"—that is, political liberation for the men, sexual liberation for the women. Although Stoppard touches on her affairs, Carr is much better at dramatizing how the belief of Herzen's wife Natalie in "universal love" became an invitation to open marriage, stimulated by her reading in Rousseau and George Sand: "I only live," she wrote, "in order to love, to love, to love." And this lively woman certainly did love, love, love—first Herzen, then Natasha Tuchkov, who was to become the wife of Herzen's friend Ogarev, and then the German poet Georg Herwegh, by whom she was impregnated, all the while declaring her undying loyalty to her husband. Natalie Herzen seems to have been an early draft for Emma Bovary in her inability to separate her novel-reading from her sexual fantasies.

Herzen, not entirely faithful himself, remained relatively patient during his wife's affair with Herwegh, who was using his own wife as a go-between. Stoppard gives some stage time to this fascinating domestic quadrangle, but nowhere nearly enough to cover the intricacies of the relationships. (He omits Herwegh's increasing hysteria when Natalie decided to return to her husband's arms; the poet even challenged Herzen to a duel for having the presumption to regain his own wife's affections.) And his method is too abrupt to capture the way the widowed Herzen later unconsciously compensated for his own marital betrayal by falling in love with Natasha Tuchkov—his dead wife's former lover, now the wife of his dearest friend, Ogarev—and having children with her under Ogarev's name. (Ogarev consoled himself through an entirely fulfilled relationship with an English prostitute.)

To do justice to this erotic smorgasbord, we would need a playful gourmet like Auden, who wrote (in "The Love Feast"): "Jack likes Jill who worships George/Who has the hots for Jack." It is not that Stoppard neglects this overheated period in Herzen's life. It is simply that he rushes over it without examining all the implications. Maybe this is because there are no footnotes and bibliographies that can help here. Instead of concentrating the story of Herzen's career into one strong nuclear action, this wearyingly encyclopedic cycle tries to include everyone and everything in a sprawling piece of history, with the result that what should be centripetal and explosive becomes linear, thin, and dissipated—tiresomely inclusive and bloodless.

Stoppard is more successful with his other major character, Bakunin, probably because Bakunin had no strong relationships except with books. It is Bakunin's reading in Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel that eventually transforms him into the inflammatory anarchist whose most famous slogan—"the passion for destruction is a creative passion"—played a role in the birth of modern terrorism. Stoppard further shows that whereas Herzen and Bakunin were both dedicated above all to liberty, Herzen's position was based on individual fulfillment and personal freedom, while Bakunin's was driven by a hatred of authority and an ambivalent relationship to the masses. "Our first task is to destroy authority," he quotes Bakunin as saying, "there is no second task"—but then he adds, "under my absolute authority." (Here he sounds a lot like Hugo in *The Iceman Cometh*, another anarchist who secretly considers the proletariat to be his slaves.) Herzen's capacity to respect individual freedom makes him, according to Berlin, "the most arresting Russian political writer in the nineteenth century." Bakunin's inability to do the same turns him into a failed political actor, a would-be Robespierre who "in his love of humanity in the abstract, was prepared … to wade through seas of blood." He waded through it with a book under each arm.

The second play in the trilogy, *Shipwreck*, focuses further on this ideological contrast between Herzen and Bakunin. The most mature, most rational, and most sophisticated of the Russian idealists, Herzen was the only one to recognize that maybe Rousseau had it wrong—that perhaps social structures not only inhibited human nature but protected it as well, that the human heart was not as intrinsically virtuous as assumed. Bakunin was more typical of his time in believing that once all restraints on human beings were lifted, happiness and freedom would reign. Herzen was more skeptical, and, as a result, the unstable pillars on which he based his hopes for overthrowing the bourgeoisie were beginning to crumble, weakened further by the failed revolutions of 1848. "Who will finish us off?" he asked. "The senile barbarism of the scepter or the wild barba-

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rism of communism? The blood-stained saber or the red flag?" This, from a man the Soviets canonized.

Perhaps the most premonitory—as well as the most integrated—scene in Stoppard's trilogy occurs in the first play, *Voyage,* when the Bakunin circle, rather like the Rostovs in *War and Peace,* gather together at Premukhino, the family estate, to discuss love and politics against a background of social unrest. All the while Bakunin is excitedly exalting the emancipated ideas of the German Idealists, he is being dressed and served by serfs. All the while he is extolling freedom and action, he is dominating the love lives of his sisters. In this thin atmosphere, where characters loll about on carpeted floors arguing that "marital sex is just the phenomenal manifestation of the ego," nobody can butter bread or break wind without referencing some fashionable philosopher of the time.

In *The House in the Garden: The Bakunin Family and the Romance of Russian Idealism*, a study of Premukhino partly inspired by the success of *The Coast of Utopia* that will be published by Cornell University Press this spring, John Randolph highlights this disjunction between the philosophical ideals of the liberal gentry and its social behavior at the Bakunin estate, particularly its reliance on slave labor. According to Randolph, Bakunin's father owned 837 "souls" (Stoppard mentions five hundred) and defended the practice of slavery after the failed Decembrist Revolution of 1825 had undermined his belief in liberalism. Still, in this world, romantic and philosophical ideals were inextricably wedded to each other.

And philosophy invariably meant revolution from without on behalf of the oppressed (though a few Russian thinkers, notably Nicholas Stankevich, believed in reform from within). The abolition of Russian serfdom remains a subtextual theme of the trilogy, which climaxes in 1861, after Czar Alexander II, two years in advance of Lincoln, issues his own proclamation of emancipation. (He undergoes an assassination attempt for his pains, bringing his reforms to an abrupt end.) Until that moment, the serfs are puppets without voices, silent witnesses of their own suffering; and on stage those mute "souls"—an army of gaunt spectral mannequins staring dumbly from behind a scrim—are often the most eloquent characters in the play.

This faulty connection at Premukhino between thought and action should have been a marvelous opportunity for ironic comedy, but it is an opportunity that Stoppard fumbles. An ironic point of view would require a more confident perspective. As a writer, Stoppard obviously identifies with the "sportsman" Turgenev, who is able to dissociate himself from the prevailing generalizations. Taking every side and no side, largely collecting anecdotes (when he is not shooting woodcock) in preparation for writing his impersonal plays and novels, Turgenev is the most detached, nail-paring character in the play. And Stoppard has an obvious soft spot for another dissenter from the general philosophizing, the social-literary critic Vissarion Belinsky. Berlin calls Belinsky "the moral and literary dictator of his generation" and "the 'conscience' of the Russian intelligentsia." An early champion of a Russian culture that would be independent of European influences, Belinsky rejected Premukhino as the locus of delusional hopes, where the gentry ignored its real feelings, "the kopecks of everyday existence," in the name of abstract ideals.

In exploring the ironies implicit in this discontinuity between ideals and behavior, Stoppard could have learned a lot from another Russian literary model. I am referring to Chekhov. Caught in such contradictions, Trofimov in *The Cherry Orchard* emerges both as a committed revolutionary and an object of ridicule. A "perpetual student" like Belinsky, who was also expelled from university only to become a passionate spokesman for emancipation and revolution, Trofimov glorifies the ideal of work, but he is the most indolent character Chekhov ever created. Belinsky, writing innumerable articles and manifestoes as well as a play opposing serfdom, could hardly be called lazy, but the similarities are unmistakable. There are echoes of Chekhov in Herzen, too, whose dedicatory letter in *Views From the Other Shore* describes the coming revolution: "You perhaps will see it. Do not remain on the shore. Better to perish with the revolution than to be saved in holy reaction." Compare Trofimov in the second act of *The Cherry Orchard*: "Forward! We are moving irresistibly toward that bright star that burns in the distance! Forward! Don't hang back, my friends!" Trofimov, though he is addressing his beloved Anya, delivers a political oration to invisible masses. Herzen's remarks are warmhearted advice to his son.

Voyage takes place in Premukhino and Moscow between 1834 and 1843, while *Shipwreck* covers the period from 1846 to 1852, moving between Berlin, Rome, Paris, and London. The itinerant Herzen family is searching for a safe place to settle and an ideology that is both plausible and progressive. These are the years of the great European revolutions, with Bakunin rushing from one capital city to another trying to foment unrest, borrowing money, and preaching, in Herzen's words, "universal brotherhood by bloody insurrection." Bakunin even manages to irritate Marx with his extremist views, though he delights Wagner through his part in helping to blow up the Dresden opera. And in this unstable and increasingly inflamed world, Herzen tries, particularly through his London-based magazine *The Bell*, to maintain his ethical balance while supporting social change, walking the shaky tightrope of modern liberalism. He will eventually find the answer in a form of gradualism, like Shaw's Fabianism, that avoids violence and seeks to change the world without destroying it.

In the concluding play, *Salvage,* the action moves between 1853 and 1868, with Herzen and his family mostly located in London and Geneva, their home a gathering place for Slavic idealists, not unlike Premukhino. Herzen has a dream that brings together all the major European émigrés—Marx, Mazzini, Kossuth, Louis Blanc—announcing their revolutionary positions while dropping their names. Natalie Herzen is dead; Bakunin is in prison. And with each scene unfolding in a different year, the play increasingly seems both emaciated and bloated, its lack of formal definition becoming ever more wearing.

What holds the action together is Herzen's growing disillusionment with revolutionary ferment, with the murderous spirit that has begun to inform the "communist socialism" of what will later be called Bolshevism (Herzen calls it "the utopia of the ant heap"). The debate between the Communist Nicholas Chernyshevsky and the Social Democrat Alexander Herzen begins to sound very much like the argument between the New Men and the old revolutionary Rubashov in *Darkness at Noon.* And so does a discussion on the Isle of Wight between Turgenev and a utilitarian doctor who tells him that "a good plumber is worth twenty poets," just as a later Russian thinker will say that all of Shakespeare is not worth a good pair of boots.

Obviously, these are the men of the future who will soon consign all men of good will to the scrap heap. At one point in the trilogy, Herzen mentions a ginger cat who "kills without purpose and spares without purpose." At a fancy dress ball, Berlinsky gets to meet this cat, who is holding a champagne glass and smoking a cigar.

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The cat, "with its insatiable appetite for sacrifice," is mentioned once again toward the end of the trilogy as "this Moloch who promises that everything will be beautiful after we are dead." Perhaps that cat is Destiny, the bane of all individual striving and revolutionary hopes. Or perhaps it is History, which Herzen defined as "the autobiography of a madman." Or perhaps it is the revolution itself, which like Saturn eats its own children. The power of Stoppard's feline image is that it cannot be easily summed up. Would that the playwright's imagination had been nourished by more such suggestive images and fewer rhetorical flourishes.

The Lincoln Center production is spectacular in every sense of the word. When most resident theaters are struggling to put on two-character plays, *The Coast of Utopia* features a cast of forty-four men, women, and children—almost all first-rate—and a host of superb designers. But the production and the written text, like Stoppard's political and domestic themes, seem to be following parallel, non-converging paths. One wonders whether such a relentlessly verbose work requires such an elaborate theatrical apparatus, until one realizes that of course it does. Jack O'Brien once again displays a splendid gift for epic stagecraft. He has the capacity to keep his actors in perpetual motion, surrounded by acres of smoke, tons of billowing waves, lots of red flags, and an occasional glimpse of Marianne on the barricades. O'Brien's fondness for stage pictures reminded me of Trevor Nunn's *Les Misérables*; but some dazzling images of nature in turmoil projected on an enormous Cinemascope scrim manage to rescue the show from its obligatory cravat-and-waistcoat clichés. (Mark Bennett's music, though a lot more incidental than Claude-Michel Schonberg's stirring anthems, also helps to stir the pot.)

Much of the acting is vital and volatile, particularly Ethan Hawke's performance as an explosive Bakunin, who remains a source of volcanic energy even when he has turned into a rasping Ulysses S. Grant lookalike. This performance establishes Hawke as a major actor for the stage. So does Josh Hamilton's tortured interpretation of the epileptic, alcoholic Nicholas Ogarev, who seems to be deteriorating before our very eyes. Billy Crudup beautifully plays a scruffy Belinsky, Richard Easton shines in a number of authoritative character parts, Martha Plimpton contributes a headstrong and willful Natalie Ogarev, and Jennifer Ehle is compelling in three contrasting female roles, among them Alexander Bakunin's daughter Liubov (which reminded me of Olivia de Haviland's retiring Melanie Wilkes), Alexander Herzen's liberated wife Natalie (which reminded me of Vivien Leigh's spunky Scarlett O'Hara), and Herzen's precise German governess Malwida (which reminded me of Carlotta in *The Cherry Orchard*). Only the gifted Brian F. O'Byrne as Herzen seems occasionally at a loss in this production, largely because his role is primarily composed of stump speeches, each of which O'Byrne delivers with the same earnest emphasis as he did Father Flynn's opening sermon in *Doubt*.

But the stars of the evening must include Catherine Zuber's authentic costumes, Natasha Katz's concussive lighting, and a set by Bob Crowley (and Scott Pask) that confirms Crowley's standing at the forefront of theatrical designers. Those glowering mannequin serfs, the shiny black marble circular floor, the frozen chandelier that drips ice, the rotting piano, and that monumental scrim with its sensational final tableau of a storm at sea all help to make it evident during these three long evenings that some gorgeous materials have been wrapped around a lot of stiff statuary.

The stagecraft helps to make this trilogy theatrical, but nothing quite makes it dramatic. For great drama is not about human beings in motion; it is about human beings in action. Lacking that compressed action, *The Coast of Utopia* remains a series of portentous book reports that skim over the surface of its subjects without ever penetrating the core of their being. Stoppard has replaced passion with peroration, poetic inspiration with the labors of the lamp. How this brilliant autodidact has been catapulted into the pantheon of visionary modern playwrights on the basis of his tireless capacity for pedantry is the most important unasked question of the play. ◈

Jackson Lears

MONEY CHANGES EVERYTHING

ANDREW CARNEGIE
By David Nasaw
(Penguin Press, 878 pp., $35)

MELLON: AN AMERICAN LIFE
By David Cannadine
(Alfred A. Knopf, 779 pp., $35)

I.

"You know, there are times when I think Karl Marx was on to something," an attorney friend of mine once remarked after handling yet another eviction case for New Haven Legal Aid. In the trenches of class warfare, one might be forgiven for occasionally growing impatient with academic complaints about the crudities of the materialist analysis of society. When the distribution of power is increasingly divided between those who have capital and those who have none, even "vulgar Marxism" can come to seem a useful tool of interpretation.

The very idea provokes derision—if not outright disbelief—in our contemporary public discourse. There are good historical reasons for this. Though rumor has it that Marx himself insisted "*Je ne suis pas un marxiste*," it has become nearly impossible to separate the man's thought from the crimes committed in his name. In common parlance, Marxism is immediately—and correctly—associated with slave-labor camps, mass murder, and hopelessly inefficient command economies. The collapse of the Soviet empire, in this view, marked the death of Marxism as an intellectual tradition.

The problem with such a perspective is that it allows the millenarian vision of Marxist ideology, and its catastrophic consequences, to obscure the glimmers of analytical insight in the work of Marx himself. Consider just his awareness of the relation between unregulated capital and unprotected labor. The chapter on "Machinery and Modern Industry" in *Capital* was the classic account of "scientific management" before the term even existed. The reader is present on the shop floor, feeling the pace of toil quicken with the managerial imperative to raise productivity by "filling up the pores of the working day" and merging the factory operatives with the rest of the machinery for making money.

Marx's account of actually existing capitalism was a powerful counterpoint to the cant of Samuel Smiles, whose *Self-Help* was published at about the

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same time as *Capital*, and who insisted (against all the evidence) on the transformative powers of plodding diligence. Marx knew better. He recognized that capital, not labor, was the key to success. This was an insight that he shared with the leading capitalists of his day. Then, as now, moralists penned paeans to work, while the rich went about their business largely oblivious to conventional pieties.

This was true in the New World as well as in the Old. Nearly all of the most successful Americans either had capital to start with or else figured out how to acquire and increase it from an early age. This did not necessarily require hard work, but it did require shrewd bargaining, inside dope, and friends in high places. The spectacle was rarely edifying, but it could be wrapped in respectability. A life of commercial chicanery could be repackaged as a noble assault on adversity. Even P. T. Barnum titled his life story *Struggles and Triumphs*.

We may be more cynical these days, but we are still fascinated—almost pornographically so—by success stories. Our book publishers certainly are. With the resurgence of laissez-faire mythology in the last few decades, we have seen a bull market in biographies of big shots. J. P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, William Randolph Hearst: all have received massive reconsiderations in recent years, books big enough to serve as doorstops in any executive suite. Now there are two more: David Nasaw's *Andrew Carnegie* (following swiftly on his life of Hearst) and David Cannadine's *Mellon*. Both biographies focus on men who made money in Pittsburgh, the city that best embodied the brutal energies of capital unbound in late nineteenth-century America. Both books strive hard to be fair but not uncritical toward their subjects; both are exhaustively researched and clearly written; both are packed with detail that often fascinates but sometimes fatigues.

Everything is here: every merger, every acquisition, every inside trade, every purchase, every benefaction—not to mention every available tidbit on family matters. There are moments when one wants to say to both authors: enough already. And yet these tomes display the virtues of their defect. Their inclusiveness makes them a gold mine for anyone interested in how laissez-faire capitalism actually works. Both Cannadine and Nasaw reveal the tautology at the heart of wealth creation: it takes capital to create more capital. Hard work may (or may not) be ennobling, but only rarely is it by itself enriching.

To be sure, Mellon epitomized the Protestant ethic in his driven personal habits, but it was hardly the source of his phenomenal capacity to accumulate capital. His father, Thomas Mellon, was a successful real estate developer who supplied his sons with a significant stake to start out on; and Andrew increased it by shrewd lending and investing, revealing an uncanny ability to spot promising enterprises. Carnegie, the son of an out-of-work weaver, was one of the few rich Americans who could claim to be a self-made man. But, to his credit, he refused to do so, locating the source of his wealth—indeed, of any millionaire's wealth—in "the community," by which he meant that he had been in the right place at the right time: Pittsburgh in the 1870s, when the shift from iron to steel was about to take off. And as Nasaw convincingly shows, Carnegie also had a knack for insinuating himself with corporate mentors and turning them into dependable cronies.

The ebullient Carnegie and the dour Mellon shared a tendency to conflate their own interests with those of society and indeed humanity at large, as well as a talent for self-deception that dissolved moral ambivalence in a warm bath of ideological certitude. In this they were no different from other captains of commerce, then or now. Both publicly disdained speculation, and both privately profited from it. Both proclaimed their devotion to free-market principles while simultaneously depending on government support, ranging from tariffs and other subsidies to state-sponsored violence. Both distanced themselves from the decisions of their subordinates; neither had a clue what life was like for the employees in any of the enterprises they owned. Both believed that they were promoting the public welfare, while they sanctioned labor policies aimed at squeezing every drop of surplus value out of the hides of the operatives. No wonder Marx and his successors dismissed them as hypocritical plutocrats.

II.

This dismissal is refreshingly clear, but it is inadequate to an understanding of the larger significance of these men. Carnegie and Mellon were plutocrats, but they were also philanthropists. They contributed to the common good even as they disregarded it in their business practices. Skeptics might suspect that these philanthropic gestures were mere p.r. ploys or guilt-ridden efforts to buy popular approval, but neither of these explanations accounts for the complexity of the two men's motives or for the long-term impact of their generosity.

There were major differences in their gift-giving. Mellon was by far the more cautious. This was in keeping with his secretive personal style. Nearly all his enterprises were private, closely held corporations; only a handful of them were ever publicly traded. The most enduring monument to his beneficence is the National Gallery of Art in Washington. Cannadine seems to think that Mellon's creation of the National Gallery, with his own extraordinary art collection at its core, marked a kind of apotheosis of "willful self-effacement" for the financier. The truth is grayer. Mellon remained anonymous because he wanted the National Gallery, like his other enterprises, to stay under the control of his family and his friends. As his son Paul observed with some asperity, the museum was "one more investment, one more Mellon Interest." That does not undermine its value as a public institution or affect the experience of the gallery's visitors, but it does put a different spin on Mellon's "willful self-effacement."

Carnegie was anything but self-effacing. Already rich in his early thirties, he was determined to be a professional wise man as well as a plutocrat. He preached a "gospel of wealth" that was a secular version of Rockefeller's Christian stewardship. It may have been "the community" rather than God that gave Carnegie his money, but the consequences were the same: he had to give it back. Celebrating "the advantages of poverty" as an aid to character formation, he declared it a sin to die rich and dismissed private inheritances as a moral disgrace. He lived like a feudal lord and left his family with ample access to luxury, but compared with his contemporaries or ours (including Rockefeller and Gates), he also gave astonishing amounts away. The contemporary cultural landscape is filled with his benefactions: libraries, concert halls, schools, research institutions, and teachers' pensions (his funds were the basis for TIAA-CREF), as well as foundations dedicated to advancing education and world peace.

The list is a revealing expression of Carnegie's worldview—its largeness as well as its limitations. An energetic autodidact with servants at his beck and call, Carnegie could never grasp the numbing exhaustion resulting from twelve-hour days and seven-day weeks of shoveling coal and puddling steel. Worrying that workers would waste wage in-

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creases on what he called "things which pertain to the body and not to the spirit," he cut their pay and increased their hours while he built libraries and concert halls for them. It would be hard to find a more flagrant contradiction between the facts on the ground and the fictions of self-culture.

Still, this was not the end of the story. While Carnegie's early benefactions may have been shrouded in self-deceptions, his philanthropic vision cleared as he grew older and focused on long-range goals. As his giving became more systematic and more successfully invested in foundations, its benefits encircled wider portions of the population—perhaps even his workers' children and grandchildren, if not the workers themselves. Philanthropically, he was in it for the long haul.

Whether his ideas have endured as successfully as his institutions is another matter. Carnegie ached to be taken seriously as a thinker on both sides of the Atlantic. His vivacity, generosity, and genius for friendship helped him to win the respect and affection of men as different from one another (and him) as Matthew Arnold and Mark Twain. But neither of these was as fundamental for Carnegie's development as Herbert Spencer. When Carnegie was a young man in search of a Theory of Everything, he embraced Spencer's lumbering sociological scheme, which distorted Darwinian evolution into an agenda of inevitable progress. For Carnegie, philanthropy became a way of underwriting the Spencerian maxim that material advance meant moral ascent as well.

But Spencer also led Carnegie in more interesting directions. The sociologist believed that modern society was progressing from a warlike "militant" stage to a pacific "industrial" stage. The demands of the global marketplace would soon make war obsolete. Stale as Spencer's formulation may sound to contemporary ears, to Carnegie it seemed fresh. The belief that war could be a thing of the past led him toward a naïve faith in arbitration and international organization, but also toward a pointed critique of American imperialism and an illuminating dialogue with its chief progenitor, Theodore Roosevelt. Carnegie's doomed struggle for world peace left him, for all his maddening self-deceptions, a tragic figure in his final years—enveloped in silence and sadness, watching his dream dissolve in the mud of Ypres and Passchendaele.

Every biographer is ultimately at the mercy of his subject, and Carnegie is a more forgiving one than Mellon. Cannadine tries to portray Mellon as a man whose aloofness may have been a mask for shyness. Occasionally he succeeds, especially in his account of the period after Mellon's divorce, when the financier was a lonely middle-aged man rattling about alone in the Victorian gloom of his mansion, fitfully striving to re-enter Pittsburgh social life. ("Go in Pierrot costume 9 p.m. to masked ball," one diary entry reads. "Home 3:30 a.m.") When one later learns that Mellon "was a very bad dancer," the picture is indeed pathetic. But most of the time Mellon defeats his biographer's efforts to present him in a sympathetic light. As Cannadine acknowledges, many people who knew Mellon well concluded that behind his cool exterior there was "either something unpleasant—or nothing at all."

Carnegie was a different character altogether. For all his ruling-class narcissism and his stupefying ignorance of his workers' lives, he comes across in Nasaw's pages as a fascinating and ultimately likeable figure. Contrasted with Mellon, Carnegie has the extrovert's advantage. He was awash in his own self-importance, but he was an engaging conversationalist and an adept orchestrator of dinner parties. Yet his difference from Mellon was more than a matter of personal magnetism. Carnegie developed a more capacious conception of the public good.

Each man performed public service, according to his lights: Mellon as Secretary of the Treasury, Carnegie as a philanthropist and a peace activist. But Mellon remained involved with his private business interests while he was in the government, despite his denials. This was not only a departure from tradition, it was a violation of the law. As Cannadine observes, Mellon simply had no conception of conflict of interest. How could he, when he believed that the pursuit of his own firms' profits was in the entire society's interest? Carnegie claimed to believe this too, but after he retired from business he developed a more cosmopolitan perspective that is still worth consideration. Unlike Mellon, Carnegie succeeded, however fitfully, in transcending the worldview of his class. He became more than a mere capitalist.

III.

Carnegie was born in 1835, in the upstairs room of a weaver's cottage in Dunfermline, Scotland. His father was never ambitious, but his mother was headstrong, and when the linen trade collapsed in the late 1840s she packed the family off to Allegheny City, Pennsylvania (now part of Pittsburgh), where some Carnegie cousins had already settled. Her thirteen-year-old son began work as a bobbin boy and later a boiler attendant at a cotton mill. Eager to move from the factory floor to the office, he took a job as a telegraph messenger boy; filling in for an off-duty operator, he quickly demonstrated his good ear. He won a job as a full-time "smooth operator" when he was still only fifteen, receiving a $1-per-week bonus from six Pittsburgh newspapers for copying transatlantic dispatches. That money "I considered my own," Carnegie remembered. "It did not go to the family support. It was my first capital."

The way to increase one's capital was to become a company man. The Pennsylvania Railroad was discovering the importance of the telegraph to its operations, and Tom Scott, the Western Division superintendent, hired Carnegie as his personal operator. As Nasaw observes, Carnegie "tied himself to Tom Scott's coattails and never let go." The relationship soon began to pay off. Well-positioned in an industry that was about to take off, Scott could invest in companies that were poised to benefit from the railroad business. One of these was the Adams Express Company. Scott loaned Carnegie the money to buy ten shares at $50 each. Carnegie received guaranteed dividends of $10 a month: a 24 percent return on his investment.

The arrival of his first dividend check was a revelation. "I shall remember that check as long as I live," he wrote in his autobiography. "It gave me the first penny of revenue from capital—something that I had not worked for with the sweat of my brow. 'Eureka!' I cried. 'Here's the goose that lays the golden eggs.'" He showed the check to his friends, all of whom were amazed by the magic of investment capital: "How money could make money, how, without any attention from me, this mysterious golden visitor should come, led to much speculation upon the part of the young fellows, and I was for the first time hailed as a 'capitalist.'" It was the first of a series of deals that made Carnegie a rich young man.

Still in his twenties, Carnegie learned that he was better at manipulating money than managing men. When Scott

TOMASZ WALENTA

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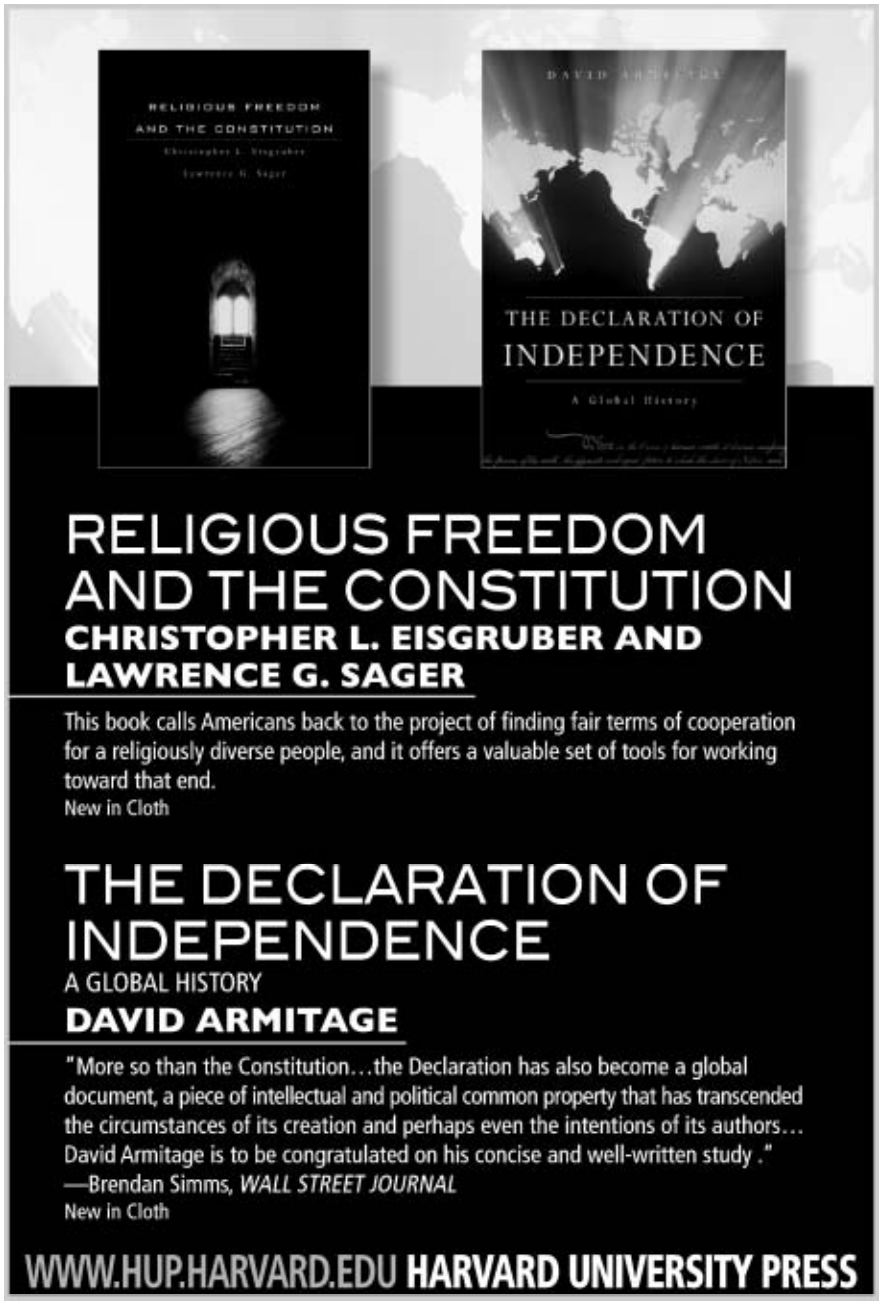
was promoted, Carnegie became Western Division superintendent and soon revealed his ignorance of his men's limits, provoking their hostility by imposing impossible demands. Claiming to have learned his lesson, he never directly supervised employees again. What he learned best was the art of insider trading. With Scott and Scott's boss J. Edgar Thomson, he bought shares in the Woodruff Sleeping Car Company just before it was enriched by a contract with the Pennsylvania Railroad. The pattern was in place: Carnegie avoided risky railroad stocks and instead invested in companies that supplied the railroads' needs: coal, wood, iron, oil. His big break came when he visited Oil Creek, Pennsylvania and with "high glee" glimpsed the profits to be made from buying into William Coleman's Columbia Oil Company. He and Coleman stored their oil in a man-made lake until the wells ran dry and the price of oil soared. From June 1863 to June 1864, Coleman Oil dividends rose from 25 percent to 160 percent. Carnegie was flush and ready to move into the Pittsburgh iron business.

As a young man of means, Carnegie could not only avoid the Civil War draft by purchasing a substitute (for $850), he could also afford to take the first of many long vacations. The guns had barely fallen silent when he embarked on a year-long European sojourn with two friends, overpaying for everything and loving it, assuming that price was the measure of quality. While his brother and business partner Tom fretted at home about saving money, Andrew kept pushing new investments. He was, he told Tom, "made to be forever head and ears in debt and to crowd full sail, despising to bury in the ground any of the talents (silver talents, I mean) which might reach his coffers, or to lie long under the suspicion of having at the bank even a moderate balance on the right side of the ledger." It was a rare moment of self-knowledge.

As the railroad frenzy accelerated after Appomattox, Carnegie refined the arts of crony capitalism. He accumulated capital by trading shares in overcapitalized companies and skimming profits from inflated stock prices. He sold bonds to raise money for railroads that were unbuilt and unnecessary, acquiring a reputation (as Nasaw writes) "not as a builder but as a financial middleman." But technology and public policy combined to turn Carnegie in a new direction.

When the tariff of 1870 placed a duty of $28 per ton on imported steel, the federal government opened unprecedented opportunities for American steelmakers to sell in a protected market. In 1872, Carnegie toured Henry Bessemer's steel plant in Sheffield, England. That was enough for him. He was, he said, ready to put "all my eggs in one basket": Bessemer steel. He built a plant in Braddock, Pennsylvania, outside Pittsburgh, and with a born crony's talent for flattery named it the Edgar Thomson Works, after his old boss at Pennsylvania. When the Panic of 1873 hit, Carnegie sold all his interests in other businesses and focused on the steel plant. Demand for steel rebounded and then soared.

The shift from iron to steel combined with the resurgent railroad boom to underscore Carnegie's accuracy regarding the source of his wealth: "the community." Pittsburgh had everything a budding steel magnate could want. It had rivers and railroads for transporting raw materials and finished goods, an abundant supply of skilled and unskilled labor, and easy access to tons of coal, which could be turned into coke to heat Carnegie's blast furnaces. The big coke man in Pittsburgh was short in stature and mean as hell. Carnegie early on recognized Henry Clay Frick as a potential rival and sought to form alliances with him, eventually making him a partner in the enlarging firm of Carnegie Steel. Throughout the 1880s, despite dips in the business cycle, Carnegie's steel business was riding high,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increasing its productivity by more than 800 percent.

During this same period, Carnegie wooed Louise Whitfield. Twenty-one years younger than he, she was the daughter of a successful merchant, from an old, respected, but not especially wealthy New York family. The courtship was characterized by long separations that produced anxious longings on both sides. Carnegie feared that he would be displaced by a younger suitor; Louise worried that he would become a London swell, forgetting her while he cavorted with actresses and professional beauties. For several years they engaged in a protracted and fitfully erotic correspondence (Carnegie imagined her at one point to be "like Pittsburgh Iron—it is very hard to heat at first, but once hot, it is very, very hot indeed, and retains its heat extraordinarily!") until they were finally married in 1887.

Judging by the available evidence, the marriage was a remarkable success. The Carnegies remained devoted to each other, and eventually the wary Andrew consented to Louise's desire for a child. (She gave birth to a daughter, Margaret, in 1897.) On public occasions, they played complementary roles. Entertaining guests extravagantly, Andrew loved to show off his young bride, to combine the parts of perfect host and perfect husband. Louise learned to be the submissive wife who could signal the patriarch to pipe down when he talked too much. This was not an easy task. Hobnobbing with the great and near-great, Carnegie strained to magnify his own greatness, too. His spreading steelworks, he believed, were more than mere machines for making money: they were evidence of the progress of civilization.

Whether his workers would have agreed is another question. Carnegie never referred to them as individuals, only as the mass of men who made up that significant entry on the books, "labor costs." And he was obsessed with minimizing costs, even as he allowed the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers to organize at Edgar Thomson, defended unions in public, and declared himself (with preposterous self-deception) a "fellow workman." He believed that he had come up with the key to labor peace: a sliding scale of wages based on the price of steel. When steel prices fell, wages would be cut. Since capital and labor were part of the same social organism, workers would willingly share in the travails of management. Individual suffering during stormy economic weather was unavoidable and indeed necessary to advance what Spencer called "the interests of universal humanity." Spencerian platitudes reassured Carnegie that his narrow interests were actually the interests of all, but labor leaders no doubt took a more skeptical view. Yet there were times when they accepted wage cuts as part of the logic of the marketplace: better lowered pay than layoffs.

IV.

The real problem for workers, and the reason that labor strife intensified throughout the 1880s and early 1890s, was that wage cuts were part of a comprehensive managerial strategy aimed at more efficient productivity (the strategy that Marx dissected in *Capital*). Carnegie and Frick wanted to put workers on two twelve-hour shifts rather than three eight-hour shifts. This would throw hundreds of employees out of work and reduce the remaining ones to beasts of burden. As Nasaw notes, Carnegie displayed "astounding insensitivity" to the deadening impact of the twelve-hour day. Management kept trying to impose it, workers kept resisting it; and in flush times, when steel prices were rising, the resistance sometimes succeeded. Like other unions, the Amalgamated wanted workers to be recognized as partners with capital, to share profits and to exercise some control over the pace and process of their labor. From the viewpoint of management, this was simply out of the question. As conflict intensified, Carnegie abandoned his earlier support for labor unions, declaring in 1890 that they represented narrow interests, while he embodied, as always, the interests of the broader community: by keeping labor costs down, he kept prices down for all. This pigheaded self-regard could hardly promote harmony between labor and capital.

And that was just fine with Carnegie and Frick. They were determined to lower wage costs per capita as well as the number of workers. When the Homestead plant contract expired in 1892, the management proposed draconian wage cuts of 15 to 18 percent, and for some workers as much as 35 percent. The union-busting strategy was already in place. Management would begin by making impossible demands; when the union refused, the managers would lock out the workers and bring in the sheriff's deputies or the hired guns of the Pinkerton Detective Agency (or both). After a brief pause, the managers would re-open the plant under armed guard and invite workers to return as individuals. Those who refused would be replaced by scabs.

The plan worked, but it was a messy business. The workers were not the free-floating, free-bargaining individuals of capitalist fantasy. They believed that they were part of a particular community in a particular place. When the Pinkertons invaded, arriving on barges one July morning, they were not allowed to disembark. Led by such figures as Billy Foy, an Englishman and former head of the local Salvation Army, and Mother Finch, a white-haired saloonkeeper and veteran of forty strikes, the residents of Homestead met the Pinkertons with muskets, pistols, fireworks left over from Independence Day, and a Civil War cannon. The Pinkertons fired into the crowd, and the crowd fired back. The Pinkertons finally surrendered at 5 p.m. and were forced to run a gauntlet of angry workers and their wives to the opera house, from which they were rescued the next day by sheriff's deputies. The workers held the plant until Frick persuaded the governor of Pennsylvania to send in the National Guard, who recaptured the factory and ended the battle of Homestead. Several strikers had been killed, but no Pinkertons or Guardsmen.

Carnegie and Frick succeeded in crushing the union, but in the process they provoked an outpouring of public anger, including an attempt on Frick's life by the anarchist Alexander Berkman. Frick had been on the premises, serving as field general and focus for popular outrage. Carnegie, who had approved Frick's strategy, kept his distance and tried to strike an Olympian pose. Sojourning at Loch Rannoch hunting lodge in Scotland during the summer of 1892, he was surrounded by stags' heads and servants in livery. He refused to discuss Homestead with reporters; instead he created his own fantasy version of events, insisting that the Homestead workers had cabled him in July: "Kind Master, tell us what you wish us to do and we shall do it for you." Nasaw, an indefatigable researcher, politely notes that "no cable from the workers to Carnegie was ever found, nor was any Homestead veteran located who could corroborate that one had been sent." Safe in his own delusions, Carnegie still could not keep Homestead from becoming a symbol of the exploitation of labor by capital.

Yet Homestead was also an economic triumph for Carnegie Steel. The Amalgamated was driven out of the steel industry; twelve-hour shifts became the norm; workers were denied grievance rights and even occasional breaks. The pores in the working day were filled. Even during the hard times of the 1890s, profits rose steadily, while wages fell and machines replaced men. Between 1892

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and 1897, the workforce at Homestead declined by 25 percent. Carnegie Steel was in high gear, dominating the market. And the key to its dominance was its victory over labor.

Throughout the 1890s, managerial strategies intertwined with structural changes in the steel industry. When the first great merger wave swept through the American economy in the late 1890s, Frick was eager to ride it, to consolidate Frick Coke and Carnegie Steel. Eventually he succeeded, but not until he and Carnegie had fought in public over the value of Frick's company. Legal testimony produced embarrassing revelations, notably the outrageous profits of a tariff-protected steel company. Ultimately Frick settled for what he thought was his due, and the result was a huge holding company, valued at $320 million. Carnegie then took on J. P. Morgan's National Tube Company by building a rival, the Conneaut Works, on the shores of Lake Erie. Charles Schwab, Frick's successor as president of Carnegie Steel, served as a mediator between the titans. He persuaded Morgan to buy out Carnegie and create United States Steel. Closing redundant mills, especially unionized ones, would be the first order of business for the world's first billion-dollar corporation.

V.

Carnegie had finally delivered on his promise to retire, which he had been making for thirty years. He had become "the richest man in the world," at least according to Morgan (who spoke with some authority on such subjects). The sale allowed him to distance himself from business at a time when public anger at monopolies was on the rise. It also meant that he could shift his philanthropic pursuits from retail to wholesale. The results ranged from the Carnegie Institute in Washington (devoted to pure research) to a people's park in Dunfermline (devoted to bringing sweetness and light to a drab industrial town). There were also organs for churches, pensions for disabled steelworkers (but only those judged to be "deserving" by their supervisors), and, everywhere, more libraries.

In 1911, realizing that he could never give all his money away himself, Carnegie created the Carnegie Corporation, the largest philanthropic trust in history up to that time. But huge as it was, philanthropy was only part of Carnegie's public role. He had long sought to shape the zeitgeist, producing ponderous axioms in articles for the *North American Review* and interviews with *The New York Times*. By the 1890s, most literate Americans knew what Carnegie thought about money. They were about to learn what he thought about war and peace.

In 1898, Carnegie had supported the war to free the Cubans from Spanish domination, but like many other Americans, he was appalled by the McKinley administration's drive to acquire the Philippine Islands. His arguments against empire were political and economic as well as moral. Trade, he insisted, does not follow the flag, colonies do not mean new markets, and money spent on military adventures abroad would come out of funds needed for internal improvements at home. But what most outraged him was the imperialists' indifference to the Filipinos' desire for self-determination. The advocates of empire, prating of freedom and democracy, were perfectly willing to crush the Filipino independence movement—even if it took years of guerrilla warfare, which it did. Unlike other anti-imperialists at the time, Carnegie did not dismiss the Filipinos as savages who should be allowed to stew in their own juices. On the contrary, he wrote in 1899, "They have just the same feelings as we have, not excluding love of country, for which, like ourselves, as we see, they are willing to die."

Carnegie's cri de coeur went largely unheard in the corridors of power, but his faith in his own capacity to influence the powerful remained undiminished. He cultivated Theodore Roosevelt with unabashed sycophancy, declaring him "a prince in the republic of letters" and remaining convinced—against all the evidence—that Roosevelt was a champion of world peace. Between the imperialist wars at the turn of the century and the outbreak of World War I, Carnegie badgered Roosevelt and his successor, William Howard Taft, with unending schemes for international organization and mandatory arbitration—the only alternatives, in Carnegie's prescient view, to the war he was sure was coming if they were not adopted. Both presidents tolerated him in public and dismissed him in private as a "peace crank."

The developing disagreement between Carnegie and Roosevelt revealed moral ambiguities on both sides. Roosevelt the progressive was annoyed by Carnegie's hypocrisy: for all his talk of peace, what about the workers worn out by his labor policies and the small investors he ran out of business? The questions were well-placed, but the hostility behind them was mired in a mass of confusion. When Roosevelt asserted that "righteousness and justice" were more important than peace, and that those goals sometimes required war, Carnegie reminded the president that since each side in war declared that it was in pursuit of righteousness and justice, the question was: who was to decide where the moral right lay? "No one, according to you," he told Roosevelt. "They must go to war to decide not what is 'right' but who is *strong*."

Roosevelt's obsession with strength was a part of his own melodrama of beset manhood. Deriding peace advocates as the "male shrieking sisterhood of Carnegies and the like," he confused physical courage with moral courage, and nations with individuals. Nowhere was this clearer than in his critique of arbitration treaties. The nation pledged to arbitration, Roosevelt wrote, would end up "dishonored and impotent, like the man who, when his wife was assaulted by a ruffian, took the ruffian to court instead of attacking him on the spot." This was the sort of thinking (or not thinking) that led Senator Chauncey Depew to dismiss the anti-imperialist critique of the Philippines War as a "scuttle and run" strategy. The same sort of category mistake continues to plague public discourse today.

Carnegie attacked this confusion head-on. Rather than promoting manly virtue, Carnegie charged, war only enhances man's capacity for "physical courage, which some animals and the lower order of savage men possess in the highest degree. According to this idea, the more man resembles the bulldog the higher he is developed as a man." Pruned of its pseudo-evolutionary arrogance, the statement stands as a rebuke to the silly verbal swaggering that still so often substitutes for actual policy debate.

The coming of World War I ended the argument between Roosevelt and Carnegie. It also ended Carnegie's hopes that men might be more than bulldogs. "All my air castles have crashed about me like a house of cards," he wrote in August 1914. While Roosevelt grew increasingly bellicose, Carnegie fell silent. All his exuberance drained away. The puckish multimillionaire became an old man overnight. He lost weight and visibly shriveled. He lived long enough to see his daughter Margaret married in April 1919, and died a few months later.

VI.

At the moment when Carnegie left the public stage, Mellon was on the verge of entering it. He and Frick—chums since their twenties and fellow members of the Duquesne Club in Pittsburgh—had just contributed $10,000 each to support the Irreconcil-

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ables, a group of Republican senators who were determined to block American entry into the League of Nations. Republicans sensed that they were about to bring down the stricken Woodrow Wilson, and they were right. When the small-town crony capitalist Warren Harding was elected in 1920, he needed a secretary of the treasury who was acceptable to Wall Street but not of it. Andrew Mellon, by then a fabulously successful Pittsburgh financier, was the perfect choice. Reluctantly accepting the appointment, he was thrust into a spotlight that he had shunned for more than six decades.

From his earliest days, he was a shy and sensitive child in a joyless household. His father, Thomas Mellon, was the son of a middling prosperous Pennsylvania farmer who had emigrated from Ulster in 1818. Young Thomas liked farming less than money, which he declared in a youthful essay was "to society what the element of fire is to matter, diffusing warmth and vigor through all its parts." He read law, married a local daughter of affluence with a sizable dowry in land, and soon became a successful real estate developer. While Andrew Carnegie was networking with Pennsylvania railroad executives, Thomas Mellon (still in his forties) was becoming one of the founding patriarchs of the Pittsburgh business community, and a particularly rigid example of Presbyterian self-made manhood. After he was elected to the post of associate judge of the Court of Common Pleas, he was ever after known around town as the Judge.

His influence on his sons, especially Andrew, was incalculable and enormous. Cannadine suggests as much by heading all his chapters with epigraphs from the father's didactic autobiography. Thomas brooked no rebellion and treated his sons as extensions of himself. In 1869 he resigned from the bench and opened a bank, T. Mellon & Sons, to create business opportunities for his boys. For inspiration, he placed a statue of Benjamin Franklin over the door. It would be hard to imagine a more enveloping atmosphere of paternal expectations.

Young Andrew was close to his father, especially after his brother (and best friend) Selwyn died young. Andrew was eager to learn banking, and Thomas was eager to trust him: he allowed his son sole access to the padlock on the safe. Absorbing his father's solitary drivenness, Andrew seemed a loner even in the Mellons' taciturn household. "The air was heavy with the imperative to acquire," one in-law said. "They had absolutely no fun." "It was work, work, all the time.... The one thing they understood, the end of all their efforts, was money." Installed at T. Mellon & Sons and already en route to financial success, Andrew had nonetheless paid a price, as Cannadine perceptively observes: "There may have been color and warmth in his life, sometime and somewhere, but if so, he suppressed them so much that no one later knew where to find them or how to draw them out. In more ways than one, he was growing into a sad man."

Meanwhile, he took on more responsibility at the bank. In 1876, the Judge gave him power of attorney for T. Mellon & Sons, and also introduced him to a rising business star (to whom the bank had made a timely loan) named Henry Clay Frick. Unlike Carnegie, who by that time had fled to New York, Frick and his new friend Andy were content to remain members of the Pittsburgh ruling class, secure in their provincial superiority, comfortably smoking cigars and sipping whiskey at the Duquesne Club. It was probably on one of those nights that Frick persuaded Andy to buy an interest in the Overholt Distillery, the first of many investments that Mellon made in Pittsburgh-area companies.

Andy and his brother Dick perfected what became known as the Mellon System. They invested in vertically integrated enterprises, which they financed but allowed their partners and collaborators to run. The prototype of these was the Pittsburgh Reduction Company, which reduced aluminum from bauxite. It was started by some bright young chemists in need of cash who came to Mellon's bank for financing. With Mellon backing and eventually under Mellon ownership, Pittsburgh Reduction evolved into Alcoa.

Such were the success stories that the Pittsburgh ruling class told themselves at the Duquesne Club bar. But most of the city lived alongside polluted rivers, breathing poisonous air, surrounded by acres of pestilential slums. Few working-class men lived to be older than forty. It was a town of millionaires and paupers, as the Homestead strike made clear.

Not that it mattered to the millionaires. Andy and Dick continued to play their cards close to the vest, refusing information even to Dun & Bradstreet, always plowing earnings back into the firm, rarely distributing dividends. Andy earned a reputation as "the best listener in Pittsburgh." He kept a poker face and turned down more loans than any other banker in town. Aloof and inscrutable, he was always dapper, well-manicured, and well-turned-out. He lived at home with his mother and father. Acquaintances recalled the horrors of Sunday dinner at the Mellons': "roast beef, watery peas, and lumpy mashed potatoes, all washed down with iced water." On weekdays, the Judge still refused to pay more than twenty-five cents for lunch at the Henry Hotel, so Andrew quietly picked up the rest of the tab.

As the father faded, the son kept up with the times. He learned how to buy streetcar franchises and the votes to support them. He also rode the merger wave, creating new banks that combined investment and commercial services, increasing their capital stock and generating new resources for investing in steel, shipbuilding, coal, and oil. Capital begat more capital. Federal banking regulations (or the lack of them) allowed him to underwrite securities and subscribe to the stock of corporations he intended to bring within the boundaries of his industrial empire. Most of his companies were closely held, such as Union Steel, formed in 1899 with only himself, his brother Dick, the ubiquitous Frick, and a steel man named William Donner as partners. In 1902 he sold Union Steel to the newly formed United States Steel at a price based on inflated stock values—the sort of paper-based profits that a good Presbyterian like his father abhorred. But by this time the old man was going blind, and Andrew was becoming an Episcopalian.

Around the turn of the century, Frick introduced Mellon to the pleasures of art collecting. His first purchase, appropriately, was a portrait of the Judge. Soon he began to buy medio-

About This Far

Still an unsolid customer,
piddler, careless among
sassafrass, lupine
and other ditch life on summer days
I set my bare feet among
to let the progesteronic heat
swallow my mind
as the sun itself etc in this preview
or what is it I am saying
will someday
those others to come in their turn
as when the speedy car
veers and goes
out of control, whipping us
into eternity where ox-eye daisies
and blue asters burn.

CHARLIE SMITH

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cre genre paintings. Before long he would be consorting with a faster crowd, returning his old canvases for new, driving hard bargains with the legendary art dealer Joseph Duveen. In Cannadine's account, art is primarily a commodity, like oil or coal. He implicitly accepts the arbitrary formulations of art-world connoisseurship, which tend to assert without argument that some canvases (usually the more expensive ones) are "better" than others. Mellon appears as tough a customer in this realm as in every other. Purchases and prices are recorded in numbing detail, with next to no attention to the paintings themselves and only a few boilerplate discussions of personal motives or aesthetic tastes. "Pictures," a friend said, "took the place of friends." That may be the closest one can come to understanding a collector as close-mouthed as Mellon.

In portraiture at least, Mellon preferred "English beauties" to men of power. Frick introduced him to an actual English beauty on board the White Star liner *Germanic* in the summer of 1898. She was Nora McMullen, the daughter of an English brewer and gentleman capitalist who cut quite a public figure in his hometown of Hertford. Nora was nineteen; Andrew was forty-three and captivated. She found him easy to talk to and listen to, an impressive man of the world. But when he pressed his suit she resisted, sensing the profound incompatibility between them. Her family was given to extravagant spending and frivolity; he would never have extended a loan to any of them. Her interests were rural and recreational; he was an urban workaholic. Yet he insisted, and she relented.

The mismatch was apparent from the start, though Mellon himself remained preternaturally oblivious to it. When they arrived in Pittsburgh after their wedding journey, she was appalled at the grim industrial landscape of the place that would be her home. "You don't live *here*?" she cried. Mellon's easy talk devolved into stony silence; he had little time for talk, or for tenderness. She took to bed much of the time, especially after the birth of their daughter Ailsa in 1901. The stage was set for Alfred Curphey, a mustache-twirling bounder from Victorian melodrama who preyed on rich and restless women. Nora met the charming deceiver on a transatlantic voyage to see her dying father. Soon she and Curphey became lovers, and in 1904 she demanded a divorce.

Mellon was shocked and horrified. He tried, with apparent success, to buy Curphey off; and husband and wife were temporarily reconciled, and even conceived another child, a son named Paul. But within a few years Nora was once more simmering with resentment at Andrew's neglect. Curphey, still waiting in the wings, re-appeared in Paris and followed her back to Pittsburgh. Nora again demanded a divorce. Andrew fought back, and Nora gave as good as she got. To the newspapers, she struck the pose of the injured wife, winning the public relations battle but losing the war, as Andrew was declared the officially injured party and awarded custody of the children for eight months a year. Everyone was "terribly scarred," as Cannadine observes, but especially the children. Ailsa became a neurasthenic invalid like her mother, Paul a lonely and self-doubtful young man. Years later their parents reconciled and resumed a distant but cordial relationship. The scars, of course, remained.

Wounded as he was, Mellon continued to prosper. Even as Pittsburgh lost its economic supremacy, he found ways to keep profits high at Alcoa and his newer acquisition Gulf Oil; these included pools, cartels, and other violations of federal antitrust law, enough to provoke a complaint from the Justice Department in 1911. Like other self-proclaimed individualists, Mellon only favored competition when it suited his interests. Otherwise he aimed for monopoly. By the 1910s, this was not a popular position. Progressive reform was in the air; even labor unions were acquiring government sanction. Mellon kept his head down and weathered the storm. When World War I began, he broke into the explosives industry, investing in a company that made benzene and other chemical byproducts from coking coal. Just about anything could be turned into capital, if you had the right touch.

So when the ideological winds shifted after World War I, Mellon became the Midas of the U.S. Treasury. With respect to revenue, he anticipated the trickle-down model of recent years, but with a significantly different rationale. Reducing tax rates on the rich, he believed, would persuade them to move their money from tax-exempt government bonds to taxable stocks. That meant higher returns for the rich, but also higher revenues for the government. It also meant low or no taxes for most Americans, as Mellon favored taxing investment income more heavily than earned income. It seemed a sensible and humane plan, and for a while it worked; government surpluses soared, and few taxpayers paid anything at all.

There was only one catch. Mellon had no use for public investment; the tax-free bonds he disdained were issued by state and local governments, for ostensibly civic purposes. Mellon trusted only the private sector, the issuers of taxable stock certificates. Not all of them were trustworthy; nor did their interests necessarily promote the national interest. This was the same inability to see any distinction between private profit and public purpose that allowed Mellon to keep supervising his business interests throughout his tenure as secretary of the treasury. He insisted he had withdrawn from involvement in business "as if I had died," but even the sympathetic Cannadine, after examining Mellon's memoranda and diaries, concludes that Mellon's claim was "a lie." The bigger lie, though, lay at the core of the laissez-faire creed: the belief that the public good was best served by the pursuit of private gain.

When the stock market crashed, that creed did, too—though Mellon clung to its shreds and tatters, confusing public and private interests even at the depths of the crisis. Confronting a disastrous wave of bank failures in 1931, Mellon refused to bail out the Bank of Pittsburgh unless his family received a controlling interest in it. He was still playing by the Judge's rules: a depression was just another name for a business opportunity. Meanwhile the old verities had to be honored, including the balancing of the budget—which the Revenue Act of 1932 attempted to do by raising taxes at the same time the Federal Reserve was raising interest rates. The result was catastrophic deflation.

Like his boss Herbert Hoover, Mellon became the target of popular outrage. When the House Banking Committee began impeachment hearings against him, Mellon was hauled before Congress and forced to admit that, on assuming his Cabinet office, he had divested himself of his bank stock by selling it to his brother. Those Mellons stuck together. He resigned in disgrace. Hoover appointed him ambassador to the Court of St. James, where he used his position to try to persuade the British government to provide Gulf Oil with a concession in Kuwait. He simply could not get the hang of the public-private divide.

The New Deal marked the nadir of Mellon's public reputation. He was widely—and unfairly—blamed for the Depression. He was also the target of a baseless and politically motivated federal prosecution for tax fraud. But Cannadine strains so hard to portray Mellon as a sacrificial lamb and Franklin Roosevelt as a vindictive predator that one yearns for a corrective dose of skepticism. Roosevelt's revenue policies hardly

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reflected a "savage, soak-the-rich atmosphere." As Cannadine acknowledges, New Deal taxation ultimately did little to redistribute wealth. The rich were sprinkled, not soaked. Mellon's assets shrank, but so did everyone else's.

Cannadine's focus on Mellon's New Deal ordeal is perhaps a way to make his gift of the National Gallery seem transcendently heroic. It certainly was a generous gift, and a nation's gratitude is in order. But Vice President John Nance Garner put Mellon's generosity nicely into perspective: "While Mellon was Secretary of the Treasury, he made several millions of dollars which no Secretary of the Treasury could properly have made … the government would be getting back something at any rate if we took this art collection." Anyway, the gift long outlived the giver. Maybe the National Gallery is a kind of belated homage to the public sector, the civic ideal that Mellon so steadfastly ignored throughout his long career. Maybe it is a reminder that while capital invariably begets more capital, it can produce more enduring progeny as well. No doubt old Andrew Carnegie would have seen it that way.

Whether Marx would also have seen it that way is another matter. He and other critics of laissez-faire, whatever their differences, shared the fundamental insight that private philanthropy alone could not sustain the public good. The well-being of the citizenry was too important to be dependent on the wisdom (or unwisdom) of a few rich men. The commonweal could not be left to the caprices of crony capitalism—no matter how generous the capitalists themselves turned out to be.

Today these convictions have come to seem almost quaint. The critique of unregulated markets has been drowned out by the din of praise for "wealth creation." Those who worry about its social costs are dismissed with a nod toward Joseph Schumpeter, who famously observed (though this was hardly all that he had to say on the subject) that capitalism progresses by way of "creative destruction." Since the rise of Reagan, the love feast for laissez-faire has continued uninterrupted, on a scale not seen since the heyday of Carnegie and Mellon. The successors of Samuel Smiles have retaken center stage, preaching a pepped-up version of free-market fundamentalism and recoining the catchphrases of self-help as if for the first time.

What is lost among the upbeat pieties and the culture of Wall Street bonuses is the awareness of loss itself—the realization that capitalism creates scarcity as well as wealth, and that "creative destruction" is still destruction: of irreplaceable resources, of craft skills and communities, of the means of livelihood for many millions, of the spirits of honorable and hardworking people. In the twenty-first century, as in the nineteenth, productivity often comes at a price that is not discussed in polite company. What ought to be at stake in public debate is the definition of wealth itself, which is invariably (and tautologically) assumed to mean the accumulation of capital. Yet more capacious definitions exist, stretching back to the movement for the eight-hour day, and surfacing in the aphorism articulated by Marx's contemporary John Ruskin: "There is no wealth but life." This, too, makes economic and social sense. If recent events are any guide, vernacular discontent with plutocracy may be on the rise, and Americans may once again be ready to take Ruskin's words seriously. Only someone besotted by money could dismiss them as mere sentiment. ◆

István Deák
FATEFULNESS

A GUEST IN MY OWN COUNTRY: A HUNGARIAN LIFE
By George Konrád
Translated by Jim Tucker
(Other Press, 303 pp., $15.95)

For many years and through diverse political systems, the writer George Konrád has served as one of Eastern Europe's leading intellectuals, and can be rightly considered the living conscience of a deeply disturbed society. As befits many an Eastern European, it is a near-miracle that he reached manhood. In this memoir, ably and accurately translated by Jim Tucker, he tells that in the spring of 1944, when he was eleven, the Gestapo dragged away his parents from Berettyóújfalu, a small town in eastern Hungary. By then the German army had been occupying Hungary for a few months. Without any real guidance from the Jewish community leaders, but sensing that something terrible was about to happen to them all, the boy dug out the 30,000 pengős (approximately $300,000 in contemporary dollars) that his father had hidden in his shop, and gave it to a non-Jewish lawyer to secure a permit for himself, his sister, and two cousins to move to Budapest. A day after the four children boarded the train, the Hungarian authorities collected the thousand-odd Jews of their town for deportation to Auschwitz. Of the two hundred Jewish children living in Berettyóújfalu, only Konrád, his sister, and the two cousins survived, as well as two twins who had been subjects of testicular experiments at Auschwitz, and Zsófi, another cousin of Konrád, who was fourteen at that time and whom the dreaded Dr. Mengele had placed into the group judged capable of work.

As Konrád explains, 30,000 pengős was what a large house cost in the countryside. (My own family papers show that, in the capital, it bought a two-bedroom apartment in a residential neighborhood.) The deal made with the lawyer and, through him, with the local authorities proved the astuteness and the foresight of the little boy. It also proved that, more than in puritanical Germany, money in Hungary could often buy security. Although Konrád was to face more dangers and would have other bare escapes, luck was with him in Budapest, where he stayed with relatives. The regent of the country, Admiral Miklós Horthy, who in the spring and early summer of 1944 willingly handed over to the Germans all but the younger adult males among the Jews in the countryside, decided in July 1944 not to surrender the Jews of the capital. Like many other things, this move, too, set apart the rich, the assimilated, and those with good Christian connections—the three qualifications being almost identical—from the poor, the unconnected, and the unassimilated. Earlier, when Konrád's mother went on shopping trips to Budapest, she stayed in one of the city's plushest hotels; now he had to carry his own suitcase. Yet he was safe, at least for a while.

The German occupation of Hungary on March 19, 1944, and the subsequent deportations, came as a complete surprise to the country's Jewish community. Very few had heard of the extermination of the Jews in Poland, and even fewer believed that the same could happen

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to them. Almost no one in Hungary remembered an early warning by Theodor Herzl, the Hungarian-born founder of modern Zionism, who, a year before his death, wrote to a Jewish member of the Hungarian parliament, that "the hand of fate shall also seize Hungarian Jewry.... And the later that occurs, and the stronger this Jewry becomes, the crueler and the harder shall be the blow, which shall be delivered with greater savagery. There is no escape."

Herzl was a great prophet, but in this case he was only partly correct. Even though about 60 percent of all those whom Hungary's new racial laws treated as Jews perished during the Holocaust, the proportion was incomparably lower among those who had converted, had married non-Jews, and were wealthy professionals. Indeed, Herzl's warning, largely ridiculed in Hungary at that time, might not have applied to himself and to his assimilated relatives. Herzl could well have survived the Holocaust—as did, for instance, one of his first cousins, a famous writer, whom the Regent's cabinet office specifically protected. Konrád's parents, too, eventually returned from deportation.

In time, George Konrád received nearly all of Europe's major literary and cultural prizes, except for the Nobel Prize, which in 2002 went to Imre Kertész, a fellow Hungarian. Unlike Konrád, Kertész had gone through Auschwitz and Buchenwald. In *Fatelessness*, his fictionalized autobiography, he tells of a Jewish boy, three years older than Konrád was in 1944, whom cruel fate had changed from a Budapest resident into a resident of the countryside. Although this was only for a few hours, it was long enough for the monstrous country gendarmes to pick him up and to send him to Auschwitz.

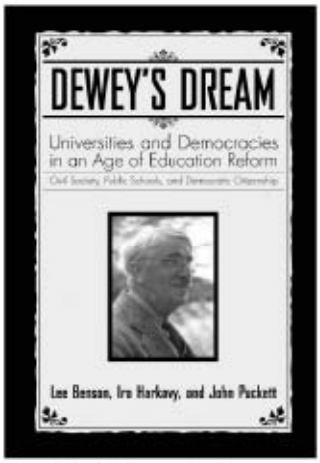
At the Frankfurt Book Fair in 1999, which the Fair organizers designated as a "Hungarian year," the organizers selected four Hungarian writers for special attention, three of whom, Péter Nádas, George Konrád, and Imre Kertész, are of Jewish background. The fourth writer, Péter Esterházy, is a member of one of Central Europe's most illustrious aristocratic families, reinforcing the widespread impression that even today nothing important can happen in Hungary without princes, counts, barons, and Jews. Yet both aristocrats and Jews have been cruelly persecuted, humiliated, and partly wiped out by various tyrannical regimes.

Perhaps the most prestigious honor bestowed on Konrád was the Karlspreis, or Charlemagne Prize, awarded by the city of Aachen, Emperor Charlemagne's city. It is given "for the most valuable contribution in the services of Western European understanding and work for the community, and in the services of humanity and world peace." Konrád undoubtedly deserved the honor for his socially conscious novels and essays. The committee also appreciated the strong stand he has always taken on behalf of justice, even if it meant infuriating his liberal friends. This was certainly the case during the Kosovo crisis. Konrád steadfastly condemned the American bombing of Serbia, which he saw, besides its inhumanity, as support given to extreme nationalism against the supranational idea. Yet as a novelist and an essayist, Konrád still must struggle, as must other Eastern European writers, against the widespread assumption that his fame has been due not only to his talent but also to the courageous stand that he took against tyranny—as if the most that can be asked or expected of a writer is dissidence, and the right politics.

Berettyóújfalu, meaning "New Village on the Berettyó River," was one of the many large settlements on the Great Hungarian Plain in which peasants traditionally sought mutual protection against marauders, while spending only the summer months in cottages located on their outlying fields. It was a modest town, but it had a highly cultured neighbor, Nagyvárad, where the theater and literary cafés were thriving. After World War I, however, the Paris peace treaties cut Nagyvárad and the rest of eastern Hungary away from Konrád's town, causing its intelligentsia to cast its eyes increasingly on faraway Budapest.

Life was good for Konrád's father, a seller of agricultural machinery and other hardware, which made him the biggest taxpayer in the region. What Konrád tells about his childhood sounds similar to that of many other Eastern European Holocaust survivors: a loving family, a hard-working decent father; trustworthy Jewish clerks and non-Jewish workers in the father's shop; a somewhat prim governess brought in from abroad and devoted maids brought in from the countryside. Sometimes the stories vary only regarding the nationality of the governess, Austrians being less fashionable than Germans, Germans less fashionable than the French. English-speaking nurses or governesses were the privilege of the highest Jewish and non-Jewish aristocracy. The Konráds being upper bourgeois, the children benefited from the presence of a German governess.

Dewey's Dream: Making public schools the seedbed of a democratic society



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Another characteristic of the memoirs of Eastern European survivors, and also of the memoirs of Konrád, is their emphasis on governmental and popular anti-Semitism before the war, from which, however, their own neighborhood and school seemed to have been largely exempt. In any case, the Konrád children attended a Jewish elementary school, where the level of education was far higher than in other schools, and where they were brought up in a thoroughly patriotic Hungarian spirit.

What explains, then, the indifference, if not the outright hostility, of so many neighbors when the authorities began "to take away the Jews"? The answer to the puzzle is, mainly, envy and greed, as Jan T. Gross recently explained so well in *Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland After Auschwitz*. Gross discusses only Poland, but, in respect to the public's treatment of the Jews during the Holocaust, all Eastern European countries with a large and economically successful Jewish population were the same. Contrary to widespread beliefs, religious anti-Semitism and the feeling of being exploited by Jews were not a crucial factor among the rural population. People no longer experienced the Jews as money-lending innkeepers; "their" Jews were lease-holders of aristocratic estates, shopkeepers, and doctors, all of whom tended to treat the peasants more decently than what they had been used to.

But even in Hungary, where anti-Semitism flourished more among the middle classes than among the lower classes, envy at the sight of Jewish children wearing white gloves on holidays, their fine homes, their facility with foreign languages, their books, their urban relatives and acquaintances, all caused the vast majority of the population to abandon the Jews in the hour of need. Violent attacks on Jews occurred mainly where the traditional authorities had ceased to function, as in German-occupied Poland and the Baltic states. In Hungary, and in other countries with a well-functioning administrative system, the deportations were an orderly and bloodless process, with the population acting mainly as spectators. Once the Jews left for "an unknown address," however, their homes were immediately emptied of their contents. When the Konrád children returned home after the war, they found nothing but devastation wrought by the neighbors and by Red Army soldiers.

When he boarded the train, Konrád explains, his childhood ended; and with it also the semi-feudal lifestyle of the Hungarian countryside. In Budapest, the children lived in crowded places while Regent Horthy was preparing to surrender the country to the Soviet army, which by that time was already in Hungary. His attempt was thwarted by an SS-led coup on October 15, 1944, which put the Arrow Cross leader Ferenc Szálasi, a fascist fanatic, in power.

With Horthy's forced transfer to Germany, the uncertain protection that he had extended to the Jews of the capital came to an end. Arrow Cross thugs took over the streets, killing thousands of Jews, while Adolf Eichmann, who had come back to Budapest, marched tens of thousands toward the Austrian border, where most of them perished. "The armed men in armbands had plenty of people to shoot," Konrád recalls, "though they had begun to sense they couldn't execute every single Jew." and so "the mood for murder flared up and flagged by turns." During the Soviet siege of the city, all was anarchy. It could therefore happen that while thousands were dragged to the Danube shore to be shot into the ice floes, one of Konrád's relatives, who was serving in a Jewish forced labor unit, was granted leave to visit his family at Christmas.

Again, money helped, and so did good connections. The Arrow Cross regime crammed nearly eighty thousand Jews into a newly erected ghetto, the only ghetto in Hitler's Europe at that time. There, except for those who were killed by roving bands of Nazis, the inhabitants had a decent chance of survival. At least twenty thousand others survived in hiding with Christian families, and by obtaining forged identity papers. Some of these papers had been bought, others had been freely given. Another twenty or thirty thousand purchased or somehow secured real or forged letters of protection from different neutral legations in Budapest—as did, for instance, Aunt Zsófi, the children's protector. Yet the letters of protection handed out by the likes of Raoul Wallenberg, or forged by Zionists, did not guarantee safety. What counted in Konrád's case is that he and most of his Budapest relatives were alive when Red Army units freed their district, on January 18, 1945.

But then new trouble began: the Russians "checked Aunt Zsófi's papers and eyed her and my sister like cats eyeing sour cream." One of the worst aspects of liberation or occupation was the Red Army's utter unpredictability. Konrád, whose life had, after all, been saved by the arrival of the Soviet soldiers, found them "unfathomable, unsusceptible to understanding … one would give the locals gifts; another would rob them. The same man often did both. There was no particular need to fear that the Germans would rape a woman, whereas these boys couldn't wait to unbutton their flies." Add to this the fact that thousands of civilians, whether Jews or non-Jews, were dragged away into POW camps from which the majority did not return. Murder-rapes by Soviet soldiers were not uncommon, especially in the countryside, but at least none of this had the characteristics of genocide.

At the end of February 1945, Konrád returned to his hometown. Traveling on the roofs of railroad cars, he found only the ruins of his earlier life. Even today, he writes, the town's synagogue is a warehouse and the Jewish cemetery is utterly neglected. But were the cemetery in excellent shape, we must interpose, it would still not put into doubt the irrevocable victory of the anti-Semites and their practice of ethnic cleansing. Consider the Vienna Central Cemetery, where the large Jewish section with its elaborate tombstones and vaults has been freed recently from much of its jungle-like foliage by dedicated young Austrian volunteers. This noble gesture will not restore Jewish cultural and economic life in the Austrian capital.

In Hungary and Romania, after 1945, many Jewish survivors, most of them former forced laborers within the Hungarian army, had to start a new life without their families. In business, they were amazingly successful, whether in Budapest or in Transylvania, where Konrád was staying with relatives for a while. Amazingly, even though the number of Jews in Hungary had vastly diminished during the war, the survivors were largely responsible for the revival of private commerce and industry, which the communists encouraged, if temporarily. Moreover, careers in the administration, politics, the judiciary, the police, and the army officer corps were suddenly open to Jews. And small wonder, since, from the Soviet point of view, the Jews alone were fully reliable.

All this was transitional, however, because the Jews were steadily leaving Eastern Europe, with nearly thirty thousand fleeing Hungary following the suppression of the Hungarian revolution in 1956. Moreover, the communist regimes were gradually replacing the Jewish cadres with newcomers raised from the lower classes. Still, the anti-Semitism that exists in Eastern Europe today is mainly to be attributed—aside from the traditional religious element, of course—to the memory of Jews in command positions after the war.

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True, the expulsion of the German ethnic minority immediately after the war eased the housing shortage at least in some regions, but the hunger for space and goods only increased under Stalinist rule, when hardly any private homes or consumer goods were produced. The Soviet-style communal apartments were often shared by the original Jewish owners, their homeless relatives, the family that had acquired the place following the deportation of the Jews, and a family of new workers' cadres. It is a miracle that more of the tenants did not kill one another.

The first year after the war was marked by an astronomical inflation, which created unheard-of opportunities for the skilled and the hardy, but in which neither Konrád nor his parents participated. His father and mother came back from Austria at the end of 1945. The father reopened his shop with the help of a small hoard of gold that he had hidden. Again, business was thriving, but not for long: in the late 1940s the communist regime nationalized the hardware store and everything else in sight.

Following his move to Budapest, Konrád was admitted into one of the best high schools, where he met friends who would later also become well-known intellectuals. In school he learned, among other things, to chant, "Stalin is our battle, Stalin is our peace, and the name *Sta-a-a-lin* will make the world a better place"; but while many of his generation of middle-class Jews joined the party or fled abroad, he did neither. His family wanted him to become a medical doctor, but he was a class enemy with an "X" next to his name on his "cadre card," and so medical training was out of the question. He was allowed to study literature at Budapest University—Hungarian literature only. In 1955, he was expelled from the university and readmitted only following intervention by his professors. By then he was already beginning to work for a small literary journal.

In 1953, the post-Stalinist Soviet leadership replaced the tyrannical Mátyás Rákosi as Hungary's prime minister with the more moderate communist Imre Nagy. A number of economic reforms followed, and many political prisoners were released. This, as well as Khrushchev's secret speech at the Twentieth Party Congress in February 1956, led to a political ferment within the Communist Party that proved to be unstoppable. Still, the revolution that started on October 23, 1956 took everyone by surprise, even those who had brought it about, namely the often Jewish, reform-minded communist intellectuals and the university students.

As mass demonstrations turned into sporadic shootings, Soviet tanks intervened. They were stopped by a hastily armed ragtag force made up of young workers, students, individual soldiers, and common criminals. The revolution triumphed: democratic parties and a multiparty government were soon formed, and, on November 1, Imre Nagy's revolutionary government proclaimed Hungary's neutrality. There followed a few days of public euphoria. Then, on November 4, the Soviet tanks came back, and gradually wiped out all resistance.

During these incredible events, Konrád was one of the few intellectuals to carry a submachine gun. He did not use it, though. While wandering the streets of Budapest, he notes, he "was asked by more than one woman if I would be kind enough to rub out one or another neighbor—you know, the one in the fourth-floor corner flat. I did nothing to appease the popular demand for murder." Whether or not it is true, the story fits well with the spirit of the time. Luckily for him, Konrád escaped punishment during the terrible years of post-revolutionary communist retribution, when hundreds were hanged and thousands were imprisoned, among them some of Hungary's most famous writers, poets, and philosophers. Those executed or imprisoned included many Jews.

While most of his friends, lovers, and cousins (as well as his sister) left Hungary following the Revolution, Konrád became a children's welfare supervisor, about which he wrote his first book, an extraordinary novel called *The Case Worker*, which appeared in 1969 (and in English five years later). Its horror stories of alcoholism, abuse, misery, and neglect would be familiar to a New York City social worker, but to the Hungarian public, until then generally kept in the dark about bad news, it came as a great shock.

There followed two sociological studies, written in conjunction with Iván Szelényi, today a well-known sociologist at Yale University. The more important of the two books, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*, argued that, under socialism, the proletariat was the most oppressed class and the intelligentsia the dominant force in society. Or, as Konrád now explains in his memoir, under communism "the intelligentsia was ensuring that the system functioned effectively by refraining from calling the power hierarchy into question, while perceiving itself as an abused victim and thereby absolving itself of responsibility." The manuscript of this work led to the arrest of the authors in October 1974, during a period of Soviet-ordered "sharpening of the class struggle." The two were offered the chance to emigrate. Szelényi accepted, and moved to Australia; Konrád refused, yet he too was released from police custody.

The terrible era of purges in the late 1950s and early 1960s gave way to amnesties, at least for the intellectuals; but workers, students, and soldiers who had taken up arms were treated as common criminals, and some remained in prison for another decade. For the intellectuals, György Aczél, the culture czar of the party, set up a three-class system: literary works that the party encouraged, those that it tolerated, and those that it forbade. Category one now being an object of general ridicule, unlike in Stalinist times, category two became the writers' favorite. But Konrád and Szelényi's manuscript fell into the third category; and they avoided punishment only by proving, undoubtedly with the police's connivance, that they had been writing their books as a form of scholarly exercise and only for their desk drawers. In any case, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power* appeared first in English, in 1979, and in Hungarian not until 1989, after the fall of communism.

Subsequently Konrád published several fictions, such as *The City Builder*, in which an Eastern European architect talks about his family and his disillusionment with socialism, and *The Loser*, whose hero is in a psychiatric hospital reminiscing about the wild times in Hungary before and after the communist seizure of power, and several other more or less autobiographical novels, one of which, *The Stone Dial*, is set in post-Socialist Hungary.

No one knows exactly why, in the late 1970s and especially in the 1980s, Hungary became "the merriest barrack in the Soviet camp": the country's dependence on Western loans and the need to buy the good will of the dangerously unstable Hungarian public must have contributed to this development. The atmosphere of semi-freedom allowed Konrád to publish more often abroad than at home, and to attend meetings of Helsinki Watch dedicated to the defense of freedom of expression behind the Iron Curtain, and to accept grants offered by, among others, the Open Society Foundation. The latter's Eastern European headquarters were grudgingly tolerated by the authorities in Budapest

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because the foundation brought in hard currency, and because it allowed Hungarian scientists to study new techniques and methods in the West. More than once, Hungarian party officials complained to me, and not without reason, that it was easier for a dissident intellectual to study and to earn money in the West, no matter what his true academic qualifications, than for an intellectual who happened to be loyal to the party.

The trouble was that the system corrupted everyone, at least to a degree: the dissident intellectuals, because they were treated in the West as visiting royalty; and those at home, because they were kept in a velvet prison, to use the memorable phrase of Miklós Haraszti, another dissident intellectual. In order to be able to travel abroad and to become the darling of Western liberal society, one had to observe certain basic rules at home. Those who violated these limitations were no longer imprisoned, but they lost the privilege of going abroad. Konrád writes that, for a decade and a half, between 1974 and 1989, he was an underground writer, excluded from regular employment. Moreover, he was a "non-person" in his country. Still, one must note that during this period he received his royalties for books published abroad, and he often traveled in the West for business or pleasure. Here is how, in 1981, he summed up his dilemma, and that of all Eastern European writers and thinkers:

> It's here in East Central Europe that Eastern and Western culture collide; it's here that they intermingle. Here we see side-by-side the physical and psychic baggage of industrial and preindustrial civilizations. Our heads, like old radios, hiss and buzz with the claims of Soviet-style state socialism and Atlantic liberalism.... As intellectuals we groan under, and revel in, our own authority. Personified contradictions, we'd like to see ourselves in a clearer light. But that's hard and risky to do. So we drink instead. Nowhere in the world are there as many drunken thinkers as in Eastern Europe.

Following the end of communism, Konrád was elected president of International PEN; in the past, he had also served as director of the Academy of Arts in Berlin. Despite these great honors, he is less often in the center of attention today than he was when his works circulated mainly in samizdat editions. In free Hungary, intellectuals no longer play the role of prophets. Society is preoccupied with business, the growing income gap between the successful and the less successful, and the political polarization between a strangely business-oriented socialist party and a nationalist conservative camp that, no less strangely, favors state intervention. Konrád, or so it seems to me, wishes to remain above the fray, an attitude that some critics have characterized as Olympian. Meanwhile he has angered his liberal-leftists friends by endorsing the American attack on Iraq as the best way to fight Muslim extremism and to secure the defense of Israel.

The fundamental problem, entrenched in the title of his fine and fascinating book, is whether or not Konrád should consider himself a guest in his own country. He poses the question even though he has done so much as a writer to enhance the reputation of Hungary. Perhaps we should not be surprised that Kertész, Nobel Prize and all, is also asking himself the same question in nearly all his writings. In view of renewed anti-Semitism on the political right, the question cannot yet be answered.◆

Christine Stansell
MADAME CANDIDATE

BELVA LOCKWOOD: THE WOMAN WHO WOULD BE PRESIDENT
By Jill Norgren
(New York University Press, 311 pp., $35)

I.

Women's biographies are the pre-eminent form of popular women's history, and the only nonfiction books that female readers will dependably buy. In the past forty years, the genre has flourished, nourished by an unending curiosity about women's lives that feminism generates. Famous men's wives and sisters turn out to have amazing stories of their own (Vera Nabokov, Alice James, Zelda Fitzgerald). Sagas of sisters, spun from strands of rivalry and adoration, are mesmerizing (the Peabodys, the Mitfords). Writers, their struggles for art and life in equal measure inevitably complicated by their sex, are an endless store of plots (Virginia Woolf, Margaret Fuller, Colette). Family relations, marriage, motherhood, isolation, sex, social opprobrium, anger, friendship, and creativity: all are explored in the study of such women's lives.

The same cannot be said about political power. Biographies of Jane Addams and Eleanor Roosevelt illuminate the achievements of women at the edges of formal politics. Of those who wielded institutional power, only Eleanor Rathbone, one of Britain's first female members of Parliament, has merited a significant book. True, there are any number of biographies of queens and aristocrats who practiced politics in oblique and unusual ways; and true, there are many studies of women in protest politics, beginning with the great feminists of the nineteenth century (Mary Wollstonecraft, Elizabeth Stanton, Angelina and Sarah Grimké) and running through the civil rights movement (Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer). But it is undeniable that most biographies of women concern love, creativity, and the search for self, rather than ambition and the scramble for the nomination.

The obvious reason is that women have been barred from politics for so long that there are few figures of importance to observe and to study. Yet the absence of biography redoubles the difficulties in understanding the lives of those women who have gone into politics. From a distance, they seem a little dull. It is easier to haul them back into the familiar plots of modern womanhood—thwarted ambition, struggle for self-esteem—than to imagine what they mostly do and mostly care about: winning elections, lining up votes, passing bills, making policy. For these reasons, Jill Norgren's study of Belva Lockwood (which comes with a graceful preface by Ruth Bader Ginsburg) is a very unusual book.

Belva Green McNall Lockwood was born in 1830, too late for the great struggles of abolition and too early for the practical politics of the Progressive era. A child of a poor farming family, she grew up in western New York, known as the "burned-over district" for its spiritual fervor; religion mixed with social reform in evangelical revivals, abolition, and temperance. She wanted to finish school, but her father believed

Christine Stansell, Edwards Professor of History at Princeton, is writing a history of feminism.

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there was no point in spending money to educate a girl. So in 1848, at the age of eighteen, she married one Uriah McNall. "The daughter of a poor farmer, I followed the well-trodden road, and was united in marriage to a promising young farmer of my neighborhood," she said of her choice many years later, unsentimentally and with a touch of sociological asperity.

Also in 1848, reform-minded women several counties away to the east, in Seneca Falls, held a meeting dedicated solely to the subject of the rights of woman. Lockwood must have caught something of that spirit, for when her husband died five years later, leaving her with a small daughter to support, she insisted on returning to school, this time to a nearby seminary (the closest there was to college education for girls) in order to train as a teacher. She graduated and made a go of it, supporting herself and her daughter and, during the Civil War, running her own school. But by the end of the war her ambitions had broadened. She sold the school building for a tidy profit, and in 1866, with her teenage daughter, set out boldly for Washington, D.C. Her only motive seems to have been a fascination with national politics, a desire to be what we would call "inside the Beltway."

The town was still a muddy, shambling place, all the more so because the aftermath of the war had flooded it with demobilized soldiers, freedpeople, transients, and refugees. Politics were at a fever pitch, with Congress repudiating Andrew Johnson's policies of appeasement to the South and embarking on its own plan for Reconstruction. Belva McNall watched the debates from the "Ladies Gallery" in the new Senate chamber. A respectable, self-supporting widow, she joined a hustling middle class taking shape in Washington, émigrés from small towns and the countryside who found a foothold in a government bureaucracy that had vastly expanded during the war. "Such people resided in boarding houses, toiled as clerks and teachers, and experimented with small enterprise," writes Norgren, who conveys an interesting sense of the social history of the city.

Belva McNall was one of the strivers, and she soon married another, the much-older Ezekiel Lockwood, an entrepreneurial amalgam of dentist, real estate agent, and pension-claims agent. It was not a love match, but a practical partnership of two people who were fond of each other. Ezekiel would not share all of Belva's "ultraist" views about women, but he respected her and supported her through thin patches, and he benefited from her practical bent for moneymaking and capacity for taking risks that paid off.

Belva Lockwood found a way into national politics through women's rights circles. The prewar movement, comprising men and women whose feminism was born of deep antislavery commitments, had gone into abeyance during the Civil War. It revived in the mid-1860s, only to split bitterly over the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, which guaranteed full citizenship and voting rights to the freedmen but not to the freedwomen, or to any other women. One group of suffragists endorsed the Republican Party's judgment that the freedmen's situation was so dire that it required immediate action, and that an attempt to institute universal suffrage would doom the entire enterprise. The other group, led by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, saw universal manhood suffrage as the Republicans' capitulation to exigency and a betrayal of democratic principle. They denounced their old Republican allies and demanded a Sixteenth Amendment to enfranchise women.

Stanton and Anthony started their own organization, reaching out to recruits just like Lockwood—younger, mostly free of other political loyalties, and eager for feminist politics that were straightforward, bold, and uncomplicated. Lockwood was taken with the intellectual excitement and vigor of the suffrage milieu, as well as with the opportunity to take on political heft. She moved up in the ranks quickly, and by 1871 she was president of the suffrage group in the capital.

It was a moment when suffragists in the Stanton-Anthony wing of the movement were interested in the problems of working women. One way to focus that interest was to protest the disparity in wages between male clerical workers in the federal government and the thousands of women who flooded those jobs during the war and remained in place thereafter. Lockwood took it upon herself to pursue the issue and launched her first congressional campaign, a one-woman lobbying effort to secure a bill outlawing pay discrimination on the basis of sex in federal jobs.

Opponents succeeded in watering down the bill to a mild affirmation of equal opportunity, but Lockwood nonetheless found important male allies in both houses who could grasp the demeaning, anti-egalitarian meanings of wage discrimination. Norgren judges that despite the defeat, the experience

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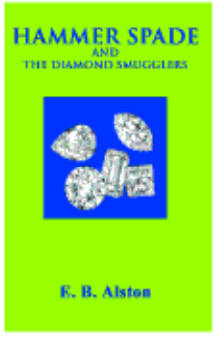

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was valuable for Lockwood and efficacious for working women. The percentage of women clerks paid at the top grade quadrupled in the next decade. It certainly taught Lockwood a lot about Congress: "Broad principle was sacrificed in the name of a modest but nonetheless affirmative statement by Congress in the matter of equal employment rights."

Most women's rights reformers were married women supported by their husbands. Lockwood's sustained attention to the problems of working women was unusual. But at the edges of the suffrage movement was a tiny group who, taking to heart the feminist call for women to utilize their full capacities, determined to acquire sufficient training and credentials to enter the heavily defended male bastions of the professions. By the 1870s, token women had squeezed into law, the ministry, and medicine. Maria Mitchell was even named professor of astronomy at the newly opened Vassar College in 1865. There were several hundred women physicians, a handful of female ministers, and a half-dozen attorneys around the country. In 1872, Charlotte Ray, daughter of a prominent African American family in Washington, was the first woman admitted to the D.C. bar.

In 1870, shortly after she gave birth to a second child, Lockwood began attending classes at a local law college, setting off a flurry of condescending notice in the newspapers. Characteristically indifferent to notoriety, she completed the course of study with the intent of joining the ranks of practicing attorneys. Although the college refused to grant her a degree because she was a woman, she went ahead and applied for admission to the D.C. bar, which denied her petition because she lacked the requisite degree.

It was a tough time to embark on a legal career. In 1873, the Supreme Court dealt a stunning blow to women lawyers in *Bradwell* v. *Illinois*, which upheld a lower court's ruling that the Illinois bar could refuse to admit Myra Bradwell, a Chicago attorney who practiced law with her husband (both were active campaigners for women's suffrage), on the grounds of the timidity and the domestic nature of the sex. The situation was uneven and complex: a few state bars had admitted women, and by the time Myra Bradwell's case reached the Court, the state of Illinois had passed a law granting all persons, regardless of sex, the freedom to choose a profession. But *Bradwell* had a strong negative effect in confirming powerful prejudices against women's ability to engage in legal reasoning and endure the nasty business of litigation.

Here Lockwood's story departs from the standard plot lines of the plucky nineteenth-century feminist's story. Blocked at two levels—by the highest court in the country and by a plain little law college—she did not write a stirring tract on injustice toward women, or dash off furious letters of protest to the newspapers, or deliver moving speeches to fellow suffragists on the tyranny of the law. She did not tactically retreat, as did Myra Bradwell, who pursued a successful law career in partnership with her husband but did not re-apply to the Illinois bar until 1890. Such were the eminently reasonable and intellectually satisfying responses of many brilliant nineteenth-century women when their ambitions came up against the inevitable dead end.

Lockwood did something else. She pulled strings. She got Ulysses S. Grant to sign a letter to the law college—he was the institution's president ex officio—requesting that Mrs. Lockwood's diploma be issued. And she formulated her second piece of legislation and maneuvered it into congressional committee, an act that ensured that no qualified woman would be barred from federal court because of her sex or marital status. In essence, she tried to do an end run around *Bradwell*. When the bill lost in the Senate in 1875, she petitioned to be admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court, betting on a technical loophole. When she lost in the Supreme Court, she went back to Congress. She lobbied doggedly for years, virtually alone, until in 1879 the bill passed. Upon gaining the ability to practice freely in any court, she promptly re-applied to be admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court. This time she succeeded, and a few weeks later became the first woman admitted to practice before the Court, sworn in before almost the same lineup of judges who had ruled in *Bradwell* that women were unsuitable to practice law.

"Her genius … lay in accepting misfortune and moving ahead with new plans," Norgren observes. The long trudge, the patience with disappointment and politicians' prevarications, a sure grasp of opportunity, and a habit of calculation are all the stuff of many a significant Washington career, but because Lockwood was an unenfranchised woman, they never took her too far. Still, she made herself a life she could never have envisioned back in western New York. The woman excelled at political truck and barter. It was not the inner life that engaged her, or the grand drama of Woman in the Nineteenth Century (Margaret Fuller's phrase). Lockwood was feminist and egalitarian by temperament and belief, but her understanding of women's need for power made her more interested in practical results than in burnishing principles. The operative word here is "undeterred."

In 1884, Belva Lockwood ran for president. It was a time of mounting dissatisfaction with the two major parties, which would crest in the 1890s with the Populists. Greenbackers and Prohibitionists were already organized as separate parties. But Stanton and Anthony were moving against the current, reversing course and cozying up to the Republicans, hoping to help elect men amenable to granting women the vote. Lockwood was fed up with the Republicans and exasperated with Stanton and Anthony, whose views she had crossed in an earlier fray over women's suffrage in Utah. Marietta Stow, a suffragist newspaper editor in California who had flirted with the Greenbackers, suggested in print that it might be time for a woman to run for the highest office in the land. Lockwood wrote to volunteer: "It is quite time that we had our own party, our own platform; and our own nominees. We shall never have equal rights until we take them, nor respect until we command it." Grit and chutzpah won her the nomination of the Equal Rights Party, organized primarily by Stow. Lockwood turned the metaphor into something literal.

The charismatic, scandalous Victoria Woodhull, the bad girl of women's suffrage, had entered the presidential race in 1872, running on the imaginary ticket of the People's Party (sprung unbidden from the mind of Woodhull). But she staged her bid as an outré performance piece, a one-woman show. Lockwood was more conventional and more serious, a seasoned politico who conducted herself with the savvy and the skill of a professional, and who believed she had a chance to win a significant protest vote. She established campaign headquarters in her home, staffed by her daughter; printed up publicity materials; and stumped the East Coast cities and California.

Newspapers treated the campaign as a comic novelty; but, according to Norgren, they actually gave Lockwood as much respect as they did James Blaine and Grover Cleveland, the Republican and Democratic candidates, respectively. She campaigned on the standard third-

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party platform of the era: high tariffs on foreign manufactures, currency reform, temperance, and a foreign policy geared to international arbitration—the latter a position that grew out of her developing pacifism. Cleveland took the presidency in a close election, but Lockwood won some four thousand popular votes, and claimed to have won more, had it not been for Democratic Party fraud.

The suffrage leadership was lukewarm and sniffy. Lockwood was an asset when she operated within the association, but she had turned into an upstart. She did not consult any of the reigning women when she accepted Stow's invitation. In her campaign, Lockwood took up mainstream issues that were way off-message for the suffragists. Anthony, on hearing her speak in New York, complained to Stanton that she "*kept too little* on her own specific ground—of *woman & her disenfranchised*—her speech was too much like a re-hash of the men's speeches!!" She had ventured off feminist turf. Anthony criticized Lockwood for dyeing her hair, the first time (but not the last!) that this issue was raised about a woman candidate.

Lockwood was unflustered. Neither her defeat nor the weakening of her bonds to the women's movement bothered her. She always remained proud of her campaign; and she ran again in 1888. Both wings of the suffrage movement openly repudiated her. By this time, however, she had honed her thoughts about the meaning of her campaigns: she saw them as a kind of civil disobedience on the one hand, and a template for continuing action on the other. There was no getting political power unless women tried to grab it, she argued, and the time was ripe: "The country is prepared to-day for a boldly aggressive movement on the part of the women of the country."

Lockwood was fifty-eight when the 1888 campaign was over, and she faced the midlife question of what to do next. Her law practice, always struggling, occupied her time and intelligence, but it was never quite enough. She wanted to be a part of bigger things. The peace movement, strengthening in Europe in the 1880s, was her next cause. For many American women who were blocked politically at home (and, in Lockwood's case, bored by and at odds with the women's movement), the international circuit of voluntary associations provided travel, stature, big ideas, and hope for influencing governments. Lockwood's longstanding interest in pacifism took her into the work of the Universal Peace Union thriving on the Continent. She joined the American arm and worked to translate new ideas about international arbitration into policies for the United States.

Fame and eminence always eluded her: despite her standing, President McKinley did not appoint her to the American delegation to the first Hague treaty convention in 1899. Still, when others did not make room for her, she insisted on making room for herself. In 1906, now seventy-six and pleased with herself for arguing and winning before the Supreme Court a long, drawn-out multimillion dollar lawsuit of the Eastern Cherokees against the federal government, Lockwood proposed herself for an honorary law degree at her old college, now a branch of Syracuse University. She picked up her degree in 1909 and next set to work trying to wangle the newly established Nobel Peace Prize. She did not succeed, but not for want of trying.

A story of Lockwood's disappointments and sorrows winds through the book, but Norgren gives it short shrift. It wasn't the woman's nature to dwell on sadness. She struggled for money most of her life, saw the small fortune in fees she won in the Cherokee case dissolve in legal action with the clients, and lost both her children. At eighty-four, she also lost her home—then, as now, a premier measure of dignity for an aging woman. Yet she remained nonplussed: involved in world affairs, interested in younger friends, indifferent to the handicap of old age, and very proud of herself. At eighty-six she regaled reporters with the story of her feats. She died shortly after, in 1916.

Norgren has the great discernment to see Lockwood's life as large and anticipatory rather than eccentric and half-realized. A legal historian of considerable skill, she ploughed through reams of records to construct an account of Lockwood's legal career—which often spilled over into her Washington affairs. Readers may not be quite as indefatigable as either Lockwood or her biographer, and sometimes the details can be dry. The inveterate reader of women's biographies may weary of Congress and the courtroom, and long to settle down into a story about romance and longing and ambition and disappointment and anger. And all these elements (except for romance) are probably here—but the fact is that Lockwood, a political creature, worked them into the tissue of political ideas and plans that was her life's substance. Which brings us to another woman who would be president.

II.

The century between Belva Lockwood's run for the presidency and Hillary Clinton's speaks to the contradictory nature of women's integration into the American political system. By the turn of the century, women's work in voluntary associations had given them access to considerable influence in Progressive-era reform politics. One historian has argued that women had more power in the 1890s than they did in the 1980s. The huge movement that won women suffrage in 1919 was the largest popular mobilization for enfranchisement in history. Yet many factors conspired to keep women out of political office once they had the vote, including the tight hierarchical structures of the two parties.

For this reason, since the Nineteenth Amendment, the movement of women into political office has been extremely slow—so slow that the statistic bruited about in the 1990s was that at the rate things were going, it would take five hundred years before gender parity came to Congress. The handful of women who did serve usually came via the "coffin route," to replace a legislator who died, typically a husband. Before 1978, when Nancy Kassebaum won her seat, exactly one woman had been duly elected to the Senate, Margaret Chase Smith, who entered thirty years earlier. In 1969, Shirley Chisholm became the first black woman to be elected to Congress, and there has still only been one African American woman in the Senate, Carol Moseley Braun.

The situation really began to change in the 1970s. In 1973, there were fifteen women in Congress—about the same as in 1953. In 1971, the liberal wing of the feminist movement organized the nonpartisan National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC), on the premise that the masculine monopoly of government was in itself a huge problem for women, whatever the party alignments. The NWPC's impact was immediate and dramatic in the presidential nominating conventions of 1972. Disarray among Democrats over Vietnam and civil rights and mounting tensions between moderate and conservative Republicans created space for women to move in. The numbers of female delegates soared, almost doubling among Republicans to 30 percent, and more than doubling among Democrats to 40 percent. NWPC women engineered planks on women in both party platforms, calling for federal child care funding, passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), strong measures to end job inequities, and the appointment of more women to top positions in government.

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It was transformative, although not in the way the NWPC expected. The conventions of 1972 mainly emboldened women afterward to run for local and state offices; and over the decades, their numbers at those levels would improve slowly but steadily. But in Congress change was very slow, almost glacial. Among Democrats, the NWPC quickly assumed a place as an interest group of consequence and feminists flexed their muscle in the party. Yet between Watergate and the election of Ronald Reagan, the NWPC clique engaged in a series of self-destructive smackdowns, first embroiling themselves in squabbles in the campaign over Shirley Chisholm's failed bid for the nomination and George McGovern's candidacy, and later in the decade spurning Jimmy Carter for his equivocation on women's rights issues.

The NWPC powerbroker Bella Abzug worked herself into the role of wisecracking tough-girl guru for the feminist faithful. She favored a theatrical politics of brashness, which yielded little. At the zenith of her career, she extricated from Carter a position as head of the huge government-funded International Women's Year (IWY) conference in Houston in 1977 and managed to squander a huge opportunity by turning it into an extravaganza of Woman Power and feel-good politics. The IWY handed Phyllis Schlafly, the diva of a counter-demonstration of fifteen thousand women across town, a sustained moment in the national spotlight.

The change in the Republican Party was even more constrained. The rise of the far right made it much more difficult for Republican feminists—the constituency that was pushing for more female representation—to move up in the party. Through the 1970s, Republicans backpedaled on the feminist reforms in the 1972 platform. In 1980, the Convention dropped the ERA from their platform—the amendment that they had added in 1940. Republicans were hemmed in and outmaneuvered.

You would think that Schlafly, who was very much a creature of the gender shift in the 1970s, would have opened up access as she whipped up jihad against the Great Satan, feminism: women, after all, were her shock troops in the anti-abortion, anti-ERA battles. But protest politics did not produce plausible candidates. The Republican women who did stay and run for office tended to be moderates to whom the young turks of the far right were indifferent. They often ran in swing districts where they were vulnerable (Nancy Johnson in Connecticut, for example).

So despite the influx of women into the conventions, the numbers of women in Congress did not budge. Still, there were sources of undetected change—primarily among Democrats—in the late 1970s and 1980s. A new kind of political operator appeared, who had been working since 1972 in state Democratic organizations and campaigns before she ran for office. Ann Richards worked in Texas state campaigns for years, won her first election as county commissioner in 1976, and state office six years later. Nancy Pelosi, the daughter of a wealthy and influential Democratic father in Baltimore, became chair of her Northern California branch in 1977 and California state chair in 1981, winning her congressional seat in 1987. And those Republican women who managed to hang on had similarly long apprenticeships. Kay Bailey Hutchison came up through Texas politics, first elected to the state legislature in 1972, and won her Senate seat twenty years later.

The percentages of women in state and local offices steadily rose: 7 percent of state officeholders in 1971, 18 percent in 1990, 29 percent in 2000. There were so many of these positions that incremental gains turned them into incubators for hundreds of fledgling pols. The NWPC dissolved and feminists despaired of Congress, but the party machinery ground on. Thus two decades of change at the lower levels went into the big change at the top in the election of 1992, which put Clinton in the presidency, when the number of women in Congress jumped from thirty-two to fifty-four. Since then, women have gained seats in every election. Every four years the numbers increase by about one-third, around ten more women in Congress. There are eighty-seven women in the 110th Congress, up from sixty-five in 1999 and seventy-four in 2005. If this rate continued, we would have gender parity in several decades. It won't continue, of course—seats don't turn over that fast; but the trend shows the glass filling, not emptying.

The present Congress is 16 percent female. The statistic is pathetic, but also significant. It has inched past the 15 percent mark that social psychology identifies as the tipping point where a minority changes from a token symbol of diversity, there on sufferance, to a presence accepted as legitimate and permanent. And it is 32 percent of the way to the 267 female legislators who would create strict equality.

Women politicians are too numerous, and a few are too powerful, to be invisible or dispensable. They are no longer weird and exotic. Their sheer variety—the spectrum of personalities, ages, ethnicities, races, ages, political views, family backgrounds, political views—refutes the old stereotypes. It is no longer possible to stuff everyone into the primal images and thereby deny them. True, there is no end of references to Lady Macbeth in the critical discussion of Nancy Pelosi and Hillary Clinton. But when Pelosi and Clinton—and, it turns out, Condoleezza Rice and Dianne Feinstein—are all Lady Macbeth, the image loses some of its sting.

The normalizing tendency will not squelch ridicule, contempt, and condescension; the misogynist playbook is ancient and cunning. Nor will it stop critics from turning traits that are unremarkable in male politicians into indictable offenses in women. "Opportunism" is the crime of Hillary Clinton, as if opportunity were not the politician's bread and butter. Pelosi is a "self-promoter," which is really saying no more than that she lives and works in Washington, D.C. And so the comparison with Belva Lockwood is illuminating, because it was Lockwood's instinct for opportunity that took her out of women's politics, with their intact principles, into the thick of things.

"She was certainly as much of an opportunist as any male politician," Norgren reflects. She was unabashedly self-promoting. "But she was deeply interested in politics … and knew that public office would never come to women without a fight." As Lockwood embroiled herself in the grimy business of Washington, she lost the cultural protections that the suffrage movement afforded their own: the image of the idealistic defender of Woman, above partisanship. But she was willing to surrender the myth so as to move about the political world, unimpeded, and take up big issues just like men did.

In 1914, when Lockwood was eighty-four years old and still lacked the right to vote, she spoke to reporters about American women's political prospects. She was typically optimistic and even-handed. Women would be elected to the Senate and the House, she predicted with confidence. (In fact, Jeannette Rankin's election to the House from Wyoming was only three years away.) As for president, that, too, was within reach. "If [a woman]

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demonstrates that she is fitted to be president she will some day occupy the White House. It will be entirely on her own merits, however. No movement can place her there simply because she is a woman." Is Hillary Clinton "fitted to be president"? The question will be answered over the next year, as she will be scrutinized for "her own merits." But whatever voters decide, we owe her, and Nancy Pelosi, and the other female pols across the spectrum gratitude for devising a new plot. The biographies of these women will be composed of the workaday, disenchanted materials of political lives—perseverance, competence, canniness, and, yes, a facility for the quick grab—that Belva Lockwood cultivated and prized. ◈

Adam Kirsch

THE BOOK OF SCATTERED LIVES

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON: A POET'S LIFE
By Scott Donaldson
(Columbia University Press, 553 pp., $34.95)

POEMS
By Edward Arlington Robinson
Selected and edited by Scott Donaldson
(Everyman's Library, 254 pp., $12.50)

What does it say about Edwin Arlington Robinson that people find it so hard to remember his name? It is not just today, when Robinson has largely receded into the shadows of American literature, that readers are likely to call him Edward, or to mix him up with Edgar Lee Masters or Robinson Jeffers. In 1925, when he won the second of his three Pulitzer Prizes, the official citation was made out to "Edward Arlington Robinson," and some years earlier his own publisher made the same mistake in an advertisement. According to Scott Donaldson, who catalogs these indignities in his important new biography of Robinson, "So pervasive has 'Edward' for 'Edwin' become that reference librarians regularly direct researchers to look for Robinson under both names."

The aural explanation for this tenacious mistake is clear enough: the relatively uncommon "Edwin" usurps the first syllable of the middle name, and the mind silently merges them into "Edward." But it is not entirely fanciful to see some more significant process at work, for the uncertainty over Robinson's name echoes too neatly an uncertainty about his accomplishment and importance. The very form of his name seems to assign him to a generally, and deservedly, forgotten generation of American poets, whose triple-barreled WASP names—Richard Watson Gilder, William Vaughn Moody—now carry a whiff of wilted gentility. When American modernism came of age, in the generation that followed, poets' names became simpler and starker, shedding the middle name or contracting into severe initials.

In his name as in his work, Robinson uneasily bridges those literary generations. Born in 1869, the same year as Moody, he lived until 1935, long enough to write to a friend, "I doubt if you would care much for Auden or Spender. They are for the youngsters." Frost, the poet whom Robinson most resembles, was just five years younger, but he lived almost thirty years longer, and now seems to belong securely to the twentieth century. Robinson, on the other hand, was a kind of Moses of modernism: from his height he could see the promised land, but he never quite managed to dwell there.

His poetry is certainly more contemporary-sounding than most late-Victorian verse. He did away emphatically with the inversions, epithets, and sound effects that lingered from the florid days of Shelley and Tennyson. "When it comes to 'nightingales and roses,'" he wrote to a friend in 1896, "I am not 'in it' nor have I the smallest desire to be.... I write whatever I think is appropriate to the subject and let tradition go to the deuce." Still, Robinson usually wrote in traditional forms—sonnets, villanelles, blank verse—and he never quite attained the compression and precision that were the disciplines of modernism. As a result, Robinson's best poetry sounds, even now, a little imperfect. It is permanently suspended between eras. He remains the hardest to place of all major American poets.

That is why Donaldson has done Robinson such an important service with this fine book. (He has also edited, in the Everyman's Library Pocket Poets edition, a well-chosen selection of Robinson's verse that sifts the golden poems from a considerable amount of dross.) Biographical studies of Robinson have appeared over the years—the first was written by his friend Hermann Hagedorn in 1938—but this is the first full-scale, thoroughly researched life, and Donaldson is the first biographer to enjoy access to Robinson's complete correspondence. Robinson himself might not have liked to see this book: when an English professor wrote to him in 1917 asking for personal information, he replied, "I am handicapped at the start in having no biography and no theories." But it will surely help to bring him more fully into the imagination of posterity, and thus heighten interest in his strange and moving poetry.

Surely no writer could hope for a more admiring biographer. "This book," Donaldson declares at the outset, "derives from the conviction that Edwin Arlington Robinson was a great American poet and an exceptionally fine human being." Donaldson offers ample evidence to support this generous and genial verdict; but his enthusiasm leads him to gloss over a more interesting story, of a poet whose rigid self-constraint to virtue has something questionable about it. Indeed, the problem of a poet's relation to goodness, as conventionally understood, is central to Robinson's work, as to his life. For it is only when he is ignoring or satirizing "fineness" that Robinson is most truly himself. His best poems are quietly radical in their elevation of marginal types—drunks, spongers, losers, madmen—over idealists and solid citizens. And his worst are marred by a dreary commitment to uplift, to official forms of consolation and exhortation. It is as though Robinson had to pay for the liberties of art in the hard, shiny coin of virtue.

Robinson's whole way of life can be seen as a bargain of this kind. He was the youngest of three sons of a prosperous, respectable New England family, related through his mother to Thomas Dudley and Anne Bradstreet. Win, as he was called, grew up to become a dropout in New York. (Still, he turned out to be better off than his two brothers: one committed suicide, the other went bankrupt.) For almost all of his adult life he held no job and earned no income, managing instead to survive on loans from wealthy friends. For many years he was an alcoholic, and spent his time drinking in saloons with an extraordinary coterie of oddballs, some of whom provided the models for characters in his poems. Melville's Pierre, adrift in his Manhattan

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boarding house, would have felt at home with Robinson, and so would Hart Crane and Dylan Thomas.

But unlike those later bohemians, who made poverty seem like an adventure, Robinson chose his path out of cool calculation. Donaldson adduces Malcolm Cowley's suggestion that Robinson took a vow of poverty ("he could accept charity as if he were a whole monastic order"), but this sounds too grandiose for Robinson, who never lost a certain Yankee hardheadedness. It is more likely that, very early on, Robinson simply analyzed the jobs available to him, the rewards in money and the costs in time and spirit, and decided that he would accept poverty as the price of poetry. As Donaldson writes, "Robinson was not out to campaign against middle-class proprieties.... Yet he understood that giving up good food and good lodging and good clothes was part of the bargain he had made in order to live a life in poetry."

Those who could not understand such a transaction, because they could not believe poetry had any real value, earned Robinson's contempt, as in the early sonnet "Dear Friends":

> Dear friends, reproach me not for what
> I do,
> Nor counsel me, nor pity me; nor say
> That I am wearing half my life away
> For bubble-work that only fools pursue.
> And if my bubbles be too small for you,
> Blow bigger then your own: the games
> we play
> To fill the frittered minutes of a day
> Good glasses are to read the spirit
> through.

This is the sound of pride, not humility, and the poem ends with a jibe:

> The shame I win for singing is all mine,
> The gold I miss for dreaming is all yours.

The gold that Robinson missed had to be found somehow, of course, if he was to keep alive at all. From time to time he would do a stint of manual labor—cutting ice on the river in Gardiner, Maine, his hometown, or working as a timekeeper for construction crews in the Manhattan subway. Often, Donaldson reports, he survived on the "coarse cheese and pickled pig's feet" that saloons served free with a glass of beer: "He could draw a map, he claimed, showing the location of every free lunch counter in the city." Most of the time, however, he was supported by loans from his friends, who finally banded together to establish a trust in his name, which paid him $100 a month from 1916 to 1926. By then, at the age of fifty-seven, he was finally making enough money from his poetry to live on.

Yet here again Robinson offers an appealing contrast to Crane or Thomas, whose unscrupulous dunning of their friends exposed the narcissism behind their claims to independence. One of the major themes of Donaldson's book, and one of the best reasons to admire Robinson, is his extraordinary capacity for friendship. Friends he made in college—he spent two very happy years at Harvard—or even earlier were friends for life, and they recognized that friendship with Robinson meant taking responsibility for his support. They agreed to this not just out of love, but also as joint venturers in the artistic gamble that was Robinson's career. Giving him money was a way of participating in the achievement of a great American poet. Robinson understood the responsibilities that this role entailed and he sustained them with dignity, as we can see in a letter that he wrote to Hagedorn in 1912: "If this finds you in a position to gamble a little more on my future, I can only offer in return the one security at my command—and that is that I shall do everything in my power to make good. If you find that you can't you will say so, and you need have no fear of my not understanding you."

Like many poets, Robinson arranged his life in order to make room for his writing, and then found that the cost of those arrangements was his true subject. Living in poverty among eccentrics and failures, he made poverty, eccentricity, and failure his muses. Indeed, he was drawn to such subjects from the very beginning, as we can see in a slight yet serious early poem such as "Two Men." Here Robinson muses on the figures, or more precisely the names, of the biblical Melchizedek and the Homeric Ucalegon, who appear once in their narratives and disappear forever. They serve him as emblems of the lost and forgotten, the vast majority of men who are erased from history: "There be two men of all mankind/That I'm forever thinking on:/They chase me everywhere I go,—/Melchizedek, Ucalegon."

What is faintly comic in "Two Men" becomes terrible in "The House on the Hill," one of a half-dozen Robinson poems that have become anthology pieces. Here it is an empty house that reminds Robinson of the transitoriness of all human things:

> They are all gone away,
> The House is shut and still,
> There is nothing more to say.

This is one of the best opening stanzas in American poetry, and it is almost a shame that the poet is forced by the villanelle form to keep on talking, after he has so convincingly told us that there is nothing more to say. The rest of the poem cannot help sounding like an anticlimax, and its language and imagery are much more conventional than that stark, matter-of-fact beginning: "Through broken walls and gray/The winds blow black and shrill," and so on.

Here is one moment, among many in Robinson's poetry, where he might have benefited from the audacity in compression that Pound brought to American poetry: if "In a Station of the Metro" can be two lines long, "The House on the Hill" might have stopped after three. The problem with "The House on the Hill" is the problem with even Robinson's best poems. They go on too long, dissipating the force of their inspiration in their dutiful working-out. It happens again in "Luke Havergal," another early masterpiece, whose voluptuous imagination of suicide is largely complete by the second of its four stanzas:

> No, there is not a dawn in eastern skies
> To rift the fiery night that's in your eyes;
> But there, where western glooms are
> gathering,
> The dark will end the dark, if anything:
> God slays Himself with every leaf that
> flies,
> And hell is more than half of paradise.

Donaldson's treatment of "Luke Havergal" is suggestive of his whole approach to Robinson. The poem, in which Luke's dead lover seems to be beckoning him to the grave, is so compelling in its enticements to death that it presents something of a problem for the more public and official Robinson, who became insistent on countering every darkness with the promise of a vaguely redemptive "Light." As Donaldson writes, "The inescapably melancholy tone of the poem defeats attempts—there have been many of them—to make it conform to [Robinson's] general philosophical outlook." That outlook, advanced in many of Robinson's putatively grander, actually lesser poems, was a soupy, sentimental Emersonism, as in "Octaves":

> Though the sick beast infect us, we are
> fraught
> Forever with indissoluble Truth,
> Wherein redress reveals itself divine,
> Transitional, transcendent.

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To make sense of this seeming paradox, Donaldson proposes that "Luke Havergal" was a deliberate exercise in pessimism, written under the influence of Max Nordau's *Degeneration*, an influential study of literary decadence that made a strong impression on Robinson. The poem, Donaldson claims, was an "experiment in imitating" the "excesses" of despair that Nordau diagnosed in contemporary art: "Robinson *deliberately* undertook to write a *degenerate* poem, and did it so skillfully as to confound understanding."

Yet there is another way to read this poem, and Robinson more generally. When we consider "Luke Havergal" alongside "The House on the Hill" and "Two Men," and dozens of later poems, such a bracketing of its "excesses" seems not only untenable but also unnecessary. It is only if we accept Robinson's "general philosophical outlook" as his true voice that "Luke Havergal" presents a problem. If, on the contrary, the darkness of that poem, and of all Robinson's best poems, was his genuine poetic sensibility, the problem reverses itself: why did Robinson feel the need to abjure artistic truth in the name of conventional uplift?

We cannot help but ask this question when we find the creator of "Luke Havergal" writing flatteringly to Richard Watson Gilder, the eminent editor and versifier, and praising his insipid poetry for its refusal of "surrender" and "weariness." Granted, Robinson had a good reason to be polite to Gilder, who played a crucial role in the most unlikely episode of Robinson's life. In 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt, whose son Kermit had turned him on to Robinson's work, published an essay on the poet in *The Outlook* magazine, lavishly praising him and quoting several poems in full. (The president, too, referred to Robinson as "Edward.") More, he took the initiative in contacting Robinson, with Gilder as intermediary, to offer him a sinecure in the Customs Department—a kind of patronage that Hawthorne had enjoyed, but that was already obsolete in Robinson's day.

Robinson's response to this boon from on high shows him at his best. He knew that Roosevelt's blessing would change his career—for one thing, it made publishers interested in him for the first time—and he was tempted by the offer of a job. At the time he was living in Boston, working part-time writing advertising copy for the department store owned by one of his best friends, William Butler. He disliked the job, and Boston, intensely; but his reply to Roosevelt had something of the flavor of Diogenes's response to Alexander. "In many respects," he reported to Gilder, "I am placed fortunately as I am, in that I have about two-thirds of my time to myself. I have told him this, making it clear at the same time that if I could have more congenial work, with more pay and the same amount of leisure, I should be happy to get it." The president met the poet's terms, and until Roosevelt left office Robinson enjoyed a well-paid make-work job at the Customs House in New York.

It made sense, then, that Robinson would be polite about the work of Gilder, the man who had helped make it all possible. Yet there is something more than mere politeness in Robinson's avowal of admiration for Gilder's poem "Non Sine Dolore." For the premise of that dull poem—an assurance that human suffering is part of some nebulous divine plan for the improvement of the cosmos—is the same one that motivates dozens of Robinson's own poems. Gilder asks:

> If He lives on, serene and unafraid
> Through all His light, His love, His living thought,
> One with the sufferer, be it soul or star;
> If He escape not pain, what beings that are
> Can e'er escape while Life leads on and up the unseen way and far?

This is a feeble theodicy for the age of Darwin, in which suffering becomes part of a divine plan for the survival of the fittest. If Robinson admired this nonsectarian piety, with its insincerity and evasiveness, its proclamation of certainty where there is no certainty, it is because he felt a duty to fill his own poems with the same fake illumination:

> But this we know, if we know anything:
> That we may laugh and fight and sing
> And of our transience here make offering
> To an orient Word that will not be erased,
> Or, save in incommunicable gleams
> Too permanent for dreams,
> Be found or known.

So Robinson in "The Man Against the Sky." These "gleams" belong to a light, or "Light," that Robinson invokes too many times to count: in "Credo" ("I feel the coming glory of the Light"), in "Captain Craig" ("There burns and shines and lives, unwavering/And always yours, the truth"), even in his long Arthurian romance "Lancelot" ("What I saw was a Gleam,/To fight for or to die for"). Just as, in life, he paid for the privilege of being a poet with patient long-suffering, so, on the page, he made up for his bleakest insights with an official ideology of redemption.

Yet none of Robinson's "lights" or "gleams" is as convincing as the darkness that immediately appears whenever he turns from the general to the particular, from the public to the personal. Reading his poetry—and he wrote voluminously, especially in his last two decades, when he produced a book-length verse narrative practically every year—one tends to forget the affirmations and to remember the individuals, the real or invented characters that populate Robinson's world. After Luke Havergal there is Richard Cory, the envied rich man who puts a bullet in his head; and Eben Flood, the heroic drunk, who lifts a jug of Prohibition liquor to his mouth in a heraldic gesture, "Like Roland's ghost winding a silent horn"; and Aunt Imogen, the spinster who plays with her nieces and nephews and thinks, "They were not hers, not even one of them"; and Annandale, the widower who decides he "might be glad to see his friends/Laid out around him with their grave-clothes on"; and Miniver Cheevy, Robinson's wry self-portrait, "who wept that he was ever born/And he had reasons." All of them, one might say, are the children of Bartleby the Scrivener, who reduced the busy complacency of American life to a bewildered silence just by being tenaciously himself, and in that silence made it possible to listen for a greater wisdom.

That was Robinson's goal, too, and the method of his best poems. His truest declaration of purpose is found not in "The Man Against the Sky" or other hortatory poems, but in "Calverly's," from his collection *The Town Down the River* in 1910. Calverly's is the name of the tavern where the speaker used to drink with some old barflies named Lingard, Leffingwell, and Clavering, all now dead. "No fame delays oblivion/For them, but something yet survives," he insists. "A record written fair, could we/But read the book of scattered lives." And he goes on to devote a poem to each of them, turning his own poetry into that very book. In doing so, he helps to give concrete form to the metaphysical promise of "Lingard and the Stars": "When earth is cold and there is no more sea,/There will be what was Lingard." This faith, somewhere between a wish and a covenant, is at the heart of some of the best twentieth-century poetry, which holds out against overwhelming loss the promise of remembrance. Edwin Arlington Robinson himself deserves to be remembered as one of its first and most moving disciples. ◆

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Cambridge Diarist

Half Full

If the Democratic Party wanted a platform that was believable as well as stirring, it could do much worse than adopting the principles and the specifics of Chuck Schumer's new book, *Positively American: Winning Back the Middle-Class Majority One Family at a Time*. I first met Chuck in the late '60s, when he was an undergraduate and I was a young instructor at Harvard College. In fact, he was one of my students, and a very idiosyncratic student at that. Chuck certainly was not one given simply to imbibing the (dubious) wisdom of his teachers. After all, in those days, our universities were experiencing a St. Vitus's Dance mania of rage and zealotry that made a rational and functional discussion of politics virtually impossible. So he was notable and noticed for his capacity to stand apart from the building takeovers and multi-slogan demonstrations. And, instead, he read his assignments, thought about them, and wrote and conversed intelligently about the material that was presented.

Still, Chuck was very much a liberal, and he knew or felt instinctively that practical wisdom did not lie in winning over the children of elites and alienating those, as the old Wobblies song put it, without whose "brain and muscle not a single wheel can turn." He graduated from Harvard Law School in 1974 and, by November of that year, had been elected to the New York State Assembly. He was 23, the same age at which Theodore Roosevelt entered the state legislature. A career had been launched—a career with not only political savvy but with heart and brain.

Chuck's is a very practical book. He is averse to the kind of sloganeering so favored by the junior senator from New York, to whom any concrete proposal has to echo in grand vagaries of the spirit. OK, this is how Hillary Clinton validates her own experience: She mistakes solemnity for significance. Not so Chuck, not at all. It is true that he uses a literary conceit through which to refract the experience of a "typical" New York family, a fictionalized family called the Baileys. But they are not stick figures; they have contours and complexities. Yes, they are middle-class and white and go to church. And Chuck is middle-class and white and (sometimes) attends synagogue. Yet, like the Baileys, Chuck can feel the expectations and disappointments of others, and this is not for him a matter of ascending or descending. Chatting with his constituents in the South Bronx or Cherry Valley is not for him a great drama.

Chuck cannot bear an America where many of the "haves" have far too much and the "have-nots" have nothing to spare. That America should be unbearable also to us. But, for all his devotion to justice and progress, pragmatism guides his pursuit of the ideal. The same hardheadedness he displayed at Harvard permeates his prescriptions, which tilt away from the pie-in-the-sky toward the modest and achievable. He describes his approach as "The 50% Solution"—an attempt to get halfway toward eradicating nagging problems. This is, to be candid, an immense relief. Here is a politician who is not promising, for instance, "no child left behind." Alas, there will always be children left behind. My God, with reading, even George W. Bush was left behind.

"Reduce Our Dependence on Foreign Oil by 50%." "Reduce Illegal Immigration by at Least 50% and Increase Legal Immigration by up to 50%." These are precise and palpable goals, and they fit onto many people's agendas, not just Democrats'. But Chuck is best on the specifics, and these stand in contrast to the bubbly goals enunciated in the John Kerry platform. I have no space here to list the promises it made. Just Google "Democratic Party Platform" and "2004," and you'll grasp how fat—in both senses—this document is. (In many ways, the Republican counterpart is worse.) The electorate is, in any case, tired of puffy pledges. Schumer insists we must return to the habits of compromise. Double CAFE standards; drill in the eastern Gulf of Mexico. All right, both sides will feel discontent. Still, we would have made progress. Let China buy Middle Eastern oil. Let Hugo Chávez jump in the lake.

Among Chuck's proposals are white-bread items: reducing childhood obesity and cutting children's access to Internet pornography, for example. These are not earth-shattering. But they address real-life matters. And they are not ideological. No one wants the country to turn into a population of fatties, as no one really wants children learning about exploitative sex on the Web. On the other hand, some (even many) civil libertarians get the hives when any proposal is put forward that restricts or restrains the First Amendment. Schumer will give them calamine lotion and move on with his project.

Chuck's book does not really address health care or Social Security. These are problems that will need megazillions, and I'm not sure that the senator knows from where these will become available. He seems to believe that many forms of tax evasion are waiting to be tackled, and the funds then flowing to Washington will fill ample coffers. From his mouth to God's ears, as my mother used to say.

His last chapter deals also with a colossal challenge, and his response is also a 50 percent solution: "Increase Our Ability to Fight Terrorism by 50%." Fifty percent is so much more than we even now imagine we might achieve (although we talk of 100 percent victories) that Chuck's candor is itself liberating. What is also refreshing is that his analytic narrative doesn't just pin blame on President Bush. In fact, here and there, he assigns responsibility to his own party, which has, in some quarters, been dismissive of the intelligence services since the 1970s. Here is one Democrat who grasps the new world in which we live, and he knows that there is no escaping it. Chuck is an old-fashioned patriot, and, whatever elections the Democrats win in the near-term, they will only win the minds of America if they can say—without stumbling over the words and without showing embarrassment on their cheeks—that patriotism is an honorable and necessary vocation.

Martin Peretz

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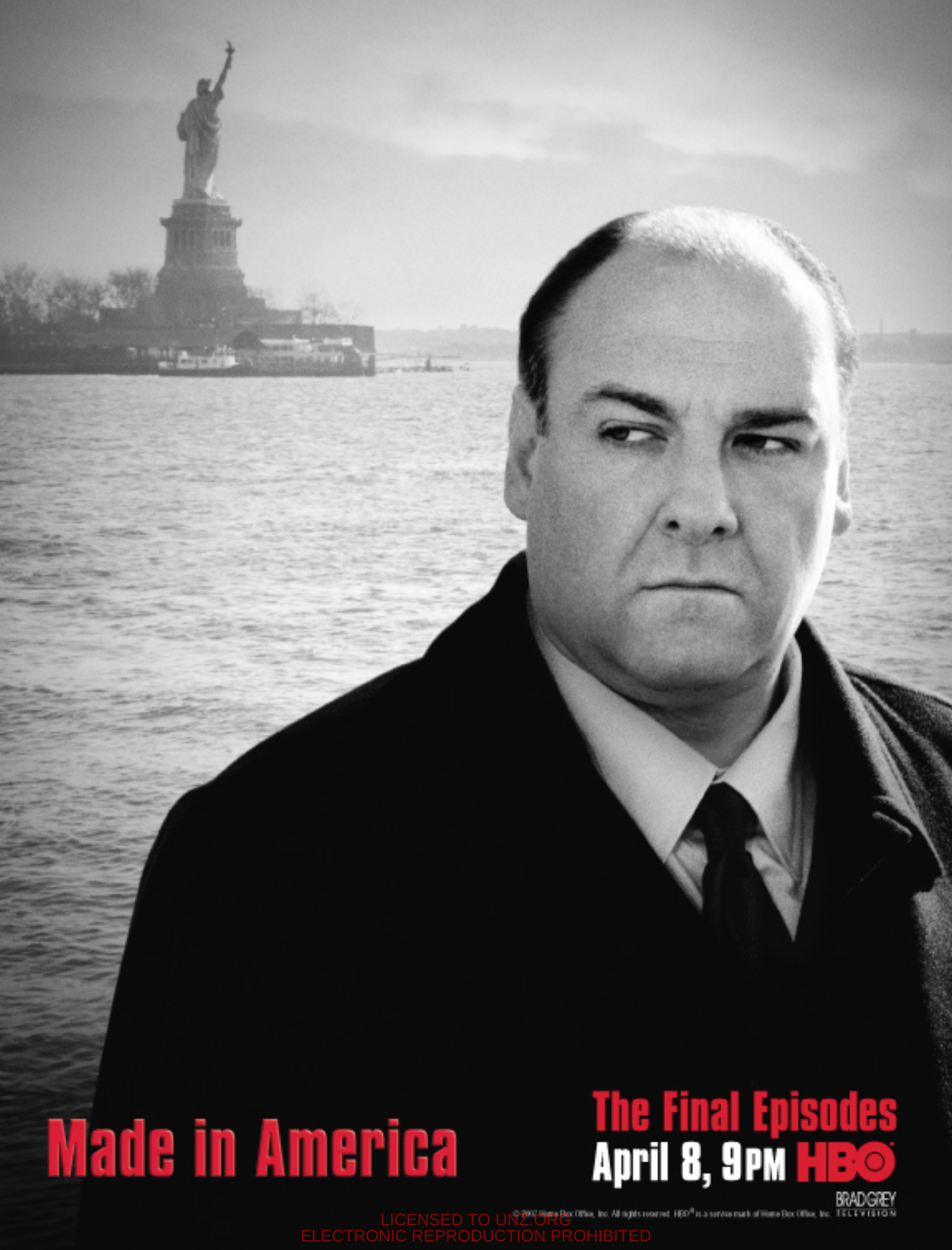

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